ESSAYS,

Suppos'd to be written by

Monsieur *FOUQUET.*

BEING

REFLECTIONS

UPON SUCH

MAXIMS of SOLOMON

AS ARE

Most proper to Guide us to the Felicity of both the Present and the Future Life.

Translated out of French.

LONDON:

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A

LETTER

TO

My Lady *HANMER.*

Dear Madam,

THIS comes to give you Notice of a Preſent I have ſent you by your Carrier, *which will yield an account how I have entertain'd my ſelf ſince you made This a Solitary Place by your leaving it: The* Preſent, *it ſhocks my Modeſty to term it ſo, is that little Volume put by me into Engliſh, which you liked when I lent it you in its Native Language, at the time of your being in theſe parts. With the Alteration it receives by my Hand, I am ſenſible, Madam, I make you a very bad*

Com-

Compliment, to offer to entertain one of your Judgment with the Defects of Mine, and yet I am not able to forbear it. The Character you gave this Piece, when you told me you had attempted to take Notes out of it, but found you could not juſtly do it without writing out the whole Book, makes me bold to believe there is ſomething in it that may ſhine quite through the Cloud of my Stile, and afford you a pleaſing Beam. The Perſon, Madam, ſuppoſed to be the Author, was Monſieur Fouquet, *who, beſides his own vaſt Wealth, had the Management of the greateſt Revenue that belongs to the Crown of* France. *Amongſt a great many Accuſations which happen'd to be brought againſt him, and which at laſt condemn'd him to a perpetual Impriſonment, one was, That he lived higher than the King himſelf, though he proved he had done it by the Ruine of his own Fortune. Now certainly this Perſon muſt needs be taken for a Witneſs of good credit, when he ſets before our Eyes, as he does after* Solomon, *the little Value which the things of this World deſerve to have with us: He writ this, and a former part of the ſame*

ſame Work, in the ſolitude of his Confinement amongſt the Mountains of Savoy, *which, the Author ſays, did not a little contribute to the enlightning his Thoughts; and ſo it may be eſteemed the fitter to be received by you, Madam, in your Retirement in* Wales, *whither you have withdrawn your ſelf.* If you find in places of this Volume, when you converſe farther with it, a Spirit of Devotion, I hope you will take notice in what Perſwaſion it was written, and examine, whether you ever met with any thing truly of that kind, which has been written out of that Perſwaſion: And I wiſh, Madam, you may make ſuch an advantagious Obſervation here as I could deſire. If my Wiſhes do not ſuit with your Inclinations, at leaſt, Madam, they agree to Perfection with the true Friendſhip and Reſpect I have for you, which would contribute, if they could, to your higheſt Felicity. *I have much Pardon to beg of you, but chiefly for my Boldneſs in printing this Letter before my Tranſlation, and in taking the liberty to place your Name before ſo weak a Work as*

my

my part of this comes to: But, Madam, allow me to give my Pen this Reputation, in consideration of the Honour I have of a Near Allyance to you, but more especially for that I am, beyond all the rest of the World,

Madam,

Your most Affectionate,

Faithful, and Obedient

Servant,

E. GAGE:

A Pre-

A

Preliminary MAXIM;

OR,

REFLECTIONS

Upon the Laſt Words of the

ECCLESIASTES of *Solomon*,

Faciendi plures libros nullus eſt Finis: finem loquendi pariter omnes audiamus.
Eccleſ. xii. 12.

PARAPHRASE.

MEN ſet no Bounds to their Pens in Writing, and leſs to their Tongues in Speaking: The Misfortune is, That the greateſt part of them know not what ought to be a Man's End in Writing and in Speaking, nor will give themſelves the trouble to find it out.

REFLECTIONS.

It muſt be confeſs'd, that the number of Books at this day is very great, and yet were they all good, there would not be many. It would conduce ſufficiently to the Honour of *Church* and *State*, did every Age produce but five or ſix, by the Favour of Providence, that merited to be turned into all Languages, and had the Priviledge of the Books of Antiquity, to be known no leſs than the Sun, and to laſt no leſs than the World, "O Immortal "Stars, ſaid the Son of *Syrach* (ſpeaking "of the Pſalms of *David*) Immortal Stars, "created to illuminate future Ages, and "to adorn them with your miraculous "Lights, even to the end of the World! *Ornavit tempora uſque ad conſummationem ſeculi.*

My deſign is, not in this place to take notice of the ill fate of ſo many Books, as no ſooner ſee the light, but are ſtrait buried in Oblivion; nor of thoſe that may be termed the *Burden of their Country*, and the *Crime of their Parents*; neither of thoſe other,

other, that like the *Lyon's Whelps* of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, come into the World armed with Teeth and Claws, and which at the inſtant begin to bite, to tear Mens Reputations, and to ſuck their Blood. *Leo factus eſt & didicit capere prædam, hominemque comedere.*

I mean to ſpeak of ſuch Books as have the Benediction of Heaven, ſuch as are penned by knowing and learned Authors helped by the Light of the Holy Ghoſt, and I ſhall only follow St. *Chryſoſtom*, my dear Reader, in making an Obſervation to you, which doubtleſs will prove uſeful at the Entrance into this little Work.

He ſays, That ſuch Books as theſe are Man's fitteſt Companions during this mortal life, Companions that are faithful, familiar, and reſpectful, that are always near at hand, without being uneaſie or troubleſome; that are ſilenced when we pleaſe, without taking exceptions, and entertain us without tediouſneſs, when we would have them ſpeak again, that teach us, without flattery or diſſembling, the Truths of God, and the Rigor of his Judgments, and in fine, ſhew us our Faults, and make

us obſerve our Weakneſs and Imperfections, yet give us no offence or diſtaſte.

So that we cannot but eſteem theſe wonderful Books in the number of the moſt admirable productions of the Holy Ghoſt, and the moſt proper, to make us ſee the Defects of our Corrupt Nature.

True it is, that this ſhould be the principal Care and Office of thoſe that love us, and whom we love; but, Where is that Friend to be found, that will ſhew us the Wounds of our Soul, when only to ſee them gives ſo great offence? Where are they to be found, that will venture to put their Hand to this tender place, and endeavour our Remedy by charitable Admonitions, when all the World knows, that but to touch it, is to make it worſe? To what end ſerve any Remonſtrances, tho' never ſo diſcreet and ſecret, and though applied with all the Civility and Sweetneſs imaginable, but to turn ſmall Scratches into bleeding Sores and mortal Wounds? How many Thunders have been raiſed in a Family; how many Quarrels and ſcandalous Breaches, only from a word of true Friendſhip, that hath diſpleaſed too nice a Friend? I ſay

I ſay therefore, that on ſuch occaſions theſe Books are our moſt incomparable Friends; their Office and Intention is, to ſet our Faults before our Eyes; and this they do in ſo obliging a way (which is the Wonder) as that inſtead of being offended at theſe free Cenſurers, who are ſo well acquainted with our Faults, we rather do admire and eſteem them; chiefly, in that they beſt know how to diſcover to us, and ſet down in Paper pathetically and clearly whatſoever lies the moſt hidden and black within us, and all that God Almighty ſees, through the impenetrable Receſſes of our guilty Conſcience.

Another Wonder of theſe Books is, that tho' they lye open before the Eyes of all the World, yet they diſcover theſe Truths only to the Perſons that ſeek and ought to know them, telling things in that admirable way, that the Guilty alone know it is they that are ſpoken to, and that the Writer himſelf knows nothing of this, no more than any other Man.

Such Sinners as read theſe Books find their Conſciences touched to the quick, and yet perceive no Hand that comes near

them, or any Eye that obſerves them. In a word, they have no reaſon to complain, but only of Themſelves.

There was heretofore graved upon a Looking-glaſs this Motto, which equally ſuits to a good ſpiritual Book, *Nemini parcit, neminem lædit ; It ſpares none, and yet it hurts none.* Indeed, it is evident, that the Glaſs ſhews to thoſe that look in it, and mind it, all the badneſs and deformity of their Faces, and the good Book all the ſpots and foulneſs of their Conſciences : Both the one and the other ſhew this without hiding, without excuſing or diſguiſing any thing, and yet neither of them angers any Perſon, or gives him any juſt cauſe of Complaint ; *Nemini parcit, neminem lædit.* It is the Property of an excellent good Book, not to ſpare in any ſort the Sin, nor yet to offend in any ſort the Sinner.

For it could be counted no leſs than a ridiculous Extravagance, what a young Lord did not long ſince, who hapning to come into the company of ſome Perſons of Quality, that were reading a Book, in which his depraved Manners were re-

pre-

preſented to the Life, fell into a violent Paſſion, and would have ſnatched away the Book, to have torn it in pieces, but being hindred, he went away full of Threats, and ſuch Deſigns as his fooliſh Rage put into his Head. The next day ſome Perſons made a Painter draw a Looking-glaſs and juſt before it a Dragon, which ſeeing there his hideous ſhape, ſeem'd to fly away, yet turned his Eyes with Indignation towards the innocent Glaſs, on the top of which were written theſe few words, as the Motto of the Looking-glaſs, (*Se non me fugit*; *'Tis not from me, but from himſelf he flies*). It is the ſight of his horrid Head, full of Poiſon and Deformity, that enrageth him, and puts him into this fright.

And this I take to be the fitteſt Anſwer can be made to thoſe malicious Spirits, who out of their hatred to them are ſtill ready to defame and play the Satyriſts on good Books.

For my part, at leaſt, if any one ſhould take offence at the Truths which in this little Work accompany the Maxims of *Solomon*; all the Apology I ſhould make

ſhould

ſhould be ſummed up in theſe three words, *Se non me:* he accuſeth his own Conſcience, and not my Pen; his Quarrel is to Himſelf, and not to Me.

But it is time, my dear Reader, to make an end of this *Preliminary Maxim*, and to acknowledge to you, that this Work done by ſo weak a Hand, hath no Value in it but what it derives from the words of *Solomon*, dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, acquainting you that it contains ~~with~~ ſuch Maxims as are proper to guide us in relation to our Temporal and Spiritual Good, which together make up the Felicity of this Life; and that theſe two ſorts of Good are ſet forth in the Texts of *Solomon*, put down in the Table at the end of this Book.

MAXIM

MAXIM I.

OPtavi & datus eſt mihi ſenſus : Invocavi, & venit in me Spiritus Sapientiæ. Venerunt autem mihi Omnia bona cum illa. Sap. 7.

PARAPHRASE.

GOD having offer'd me, when I came to the Throne, whatſoever my Heart ſhould think good to deſire, I thought I could not chuſe better than that, which was moſt worthy to come from his Almighty Hand. The greateſt part of Mankind ask every thing of him in their Prayers, except his Grace, that they may become Wiſe, tho' it was this alone I durſt ask of him. *Da mihi*, ſaid I to him, O Lord, ſince you will have me reign, give me that which makes your ſelf reign happily : *Sedium tuarum Aſſiſtricem Sapientiam*; Call to mind, O Great God that it was your Wiſdom, whoſe Light aſſiſted you to produce this World, and to ſee that every part of the Work ſhould be good and

and pleaſing in your Eyes : Is it not the ſame alſo that aids you ſtill to govern the whole, and that marks out to your Providence the ways of its Conduct, and the rules of its Doings ? *Mitte illam ut mecum ſit & mecum laboret* ; O ſend her me, that I may be enlightned by her, during my toilſom Journey : and ſuffer me not to be upon the Throne, unleſs ſhe be there with me, You that never ruled without her, and that know it, in her abſence, to be the moſt unhappy ſtation for any Man. *Invocavi & venit in me Spiritus Sapientiæ.*

REFLECTIONS.

Men aim holily, at the Felicities of the Life to come, yet are not forbid to look after thoſe of this preſent Life ; Neceſſity often forces us to deſire them, God ſometimes helps us to acquire them : There are even ſome of them that he has choſen to be the Lot of his Elect in this low Region, and to be the Mark of their Election and Perſeverance in his Grace : amongſt theſe there is not any one ſo deſirable, as the Skill how to order our Actions with that

that Wiſdom, as they may neither harm Others nor our Selves.

Wiſdom is in effect no other thing, but the *Felicity of Man*, both in this and in the other World. It is a general Good which contains all that infinite Variety of different Helps and Remedies, of which we ſtand in need during this Mortal Life. She ſufficeth all alone to him that knows and does poſſeſs her; whatſoever elſe is wanting to Man, when once he becomes Wiſe, he wants no more to make him Happy.

Venerunt mihi omnia Bona cum illa. Sap. 7.

It may be ſaid of her at leaſt, that ſhe is the Rendezvous of thoſe Qualities which render a Man ſovereignly perfect and truly divine; who has her, has a modeſty of Countenance, a ſerenity of Mind, a force and greatneſs of Wit, a ſublimity of Knowledge, and a reach into all the Secrets of Nature, an elevation up to the high Spring of Light, and a continual Familiarity with God; in fine, an Immenſity of Heart, always fixed upon Heaven, and yet always preſent to this Lower World, in the exerciſe of its Courage and Bounty towards thoſe who depend on him: Can we then

then do leſs than own, that where theſe are, ſuch a Man in a Country, altho' one of the leaſt rich, and leaſt befriended by Fortune, is in ſpight of her the moſt happy and moſt amiable of Men? All that ſhe can give to Kings comes not into compariſon with the value of what he poſſeſſes. *Pretioſior eſt cunctis opibus, & omnia quæ deſiderari poſſunt non valent ſapientiæ comparari.*

It is not my deſign, O Chriſtian Soul, to raiſe up your hopes to this high Pitch, ſo much above your Reach; meaſure your ſtrength, and know your ſelf. Wiſdom has its different degrees, and do you aim at that ſtation to which God and your Conſcience calls you. All that I pretend here, is to tell you, That you that are not content with your preſent condition, nor with that you have been in formerly, if you will be but as wiſe, as you may be, by the Help and Grace of Almighty God, which he offers you, you ſhall find, in what Station or Place ſoever you are, your Quiet in it; and your *Happineſs* thus ſetled, ſhall never more be overthrown by any Misfortune.

I do

I do not ſay, that *Fortune* ſhall then become favourable to you; or that ſhe ſhall not Attempt to do you Miſchief; I only ſay, it ſhall not be in her power to Afflict you.

There is no queſtion, but that thoſe Miſeries which over-run whole Kingdoms may enter into your Country, fall upon your Lands, and enter your very Houſe, but never into your Self. That part of the Immortal Soul where God has graved his Image, and Wiſdom ſtamped her Priviledge, muſt be exempt from all thoſe Prophanations, to which the reſt of Man is ſo much liable. Grief, Vexation, and Impatience come not at that place, but in the midſt of Loſs and Ruines: Quiet ſhall never periſh there, no more than Innocence.

Let them weep and lament who know, their Sins and the Imprudence of their Actions, have brought upon them theſe ill Accidents. Your Virtue, which has kept you from being one in the number of the Faulty, will keep you alſo from being one in the number of the Unhappy; whilſt ſuch as they make Outcries of Deſpair,

and

and ſink under the Storm, you ſhall poſſeſs a perfect calm of Heart, and will reckon it a better Condition, and more honourable, to have had no ſhare in the Faults which may have brought Miſery amongſt your Family, than to have a part in a good Fortune, that ſhould befal it meerly by Accident.

In a word, *Non contriſtabit Juſtum quidquid ei acciderit*, ſays *Solomon*; No Accident that befals the wiſe and the juſt man, can turn him from his right Byaſs, and the doing of his Duty, or ſo much as cauſe in him diſorderly Motions. There may be Tumult and Noiſe round about him, but Peace ſhall never forſake him within. And whilſt he finds his Soul ſerene and quiet, it will little concern him, though his Aims be croſſed, or if he ſuffers in his Affairs: *Non contriſtabit quidquid ei acciderit.*

Non accedet ad te Malum & Flagellum non appropinquabit Tabernaculo tuo.

But *David* ſays more, and goes yet further, let us not fear to follow him in ſaying, That if there be Wiſdom in you, the Goodneſs of God will not permit the Strokes of his Anger to come

come at you, or ſo much as to threaten or approach your Habitation.

The greateſt part of our Misfortunes, and almoſt all of them, befal us, by the want of foreſight. That which happens to the Merchant, who having left the Harbour indiſcreetly, and not foreſeeing the Tempeſt, periſhes upon the Sea, is common to almoſt all the afflicted, that lament either the Overthrow of their Law-ſuits, or their other Loſſes. They lay the Fault both upon Heaven and Earth, when the true cauſe is, that they were blind, and could not ſee the Diſguiſes put on Truth by falſe-hearted Men, nor the ſecret Turns of *Fortune*, hid in the obſcurity of the time to come. *Quia non cognoviſti tempus*, ſaith the Goſpel: Whoever you be that relate your Miſchances, complaining bitterly of the cruelty of your Enemies, of the deceit of your Flatterers, or injuſtice of your Judges, accuſe not any thing but your own Ignorance, and the ſmall reach of your Thoughts, which could not ſee beyond what appeared before your Eyes: the diſcerning Thoughts of Wiſdom go much further.

Obſerve, that though it be ſaid of the generality of Men, that they are ſubject to Afflictions, yet it is rarely ſaid of the Wiſe Man, who has a holy Modeſty and Prudence. There is a kind of Inſtinct in us, which prompts us to believe, that to be wiſe and happy are not two diſtinct Qualities in ſuch a Perſon : we are perſwaded, that he can never miſs of Succeſs, becauſe he bears in his Looks the Character of a Mind, not to be deceived in the Events of what he Undertakes.

In Reality, according to the Motto which *Solomon* does beſtow upon him, one of his Eſſential Properties is, to know to day what will be to morrow, and to prevent the Evil by his Care and Precaution, which are enlightned from above.

Omnia improviſa didici.

He does not limit his Sight to the Countenances of Men; he has a Light that goes further than the Eyes, and ſhews him what lies moſt dark and hidden in their Hearts. St. *Peter* ſays, (ſpeaking of true Wiſdom) *It is a Light created by God to ſhine in dark places : Lucerna lucens in Caliginoſo loco.*

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The Apoſtle means, that as there are two Lights in this World appointed to diſcover to our mortal Eyes things material and viſible, one the Sun, which ſhews them clearly by day; the other the Moon, which ſhews them alſo, but yet obſcurely, in the abſence of the Sun; ſo are there two other Lights appointed for our Souls, by which to ſee things ſpiritual and immaterial; the firſt, that Sun of *Paradice*, termed the *Light of Glory*, which will manifeſtly diſcover to us the infinite Greatneſs and Beauty of the King of kings, and all whatever that is wonderful and incomprehenſible in the Myſteries of the Trinity, and of the Incarnation of the Word: the ſecond, (which is the leſſer, *luminare minus*) the Light of Wiſdom, which has its Riſe and Spring from the Boſom of God, and is to enlighten us upon the Earth, and to ſhew us obſcurely, yet certainly, thoſe Truths which are inviſible and impenetrable to the blind Skill of vain Politicians and Philoſophers; *Lucerna lucens in Caliginoſo loco.*

Enlightned by the Rays of this glorious and divine Star, the Sages of all times have

penetrated thro' the Clouds of Ignorance, (with which all Men are involved) into the moſt profound Myſteries of the Goſpel, and into thoſe of Grace and Nature.

By the help of the ſame Rays, when you become wiſe, you will diſcover, not by Revelation, or any miraculous Illumination, but by Conjectures ſupernaturally guided, the darkeſt Thoughts of Mens Hearts, the Deſigns of Human Policy, the Snares laid by Ambition, Hypocriſie, Envy, and Impiety, with all the Dangers hidden in the ſecret Paths of Treachery and Hatred. *I ſhall ſee them*, ſays *Job*, ſpeaking to God, *and ſhall walk in the midſt of an undaunted confidence, when I ſhall be enlightned by your light: Quando ſplendebit lucerna tua ſuper caput meum & in tenebris ad lumen tuum Ambulabo.*

Quæcamq; ſunt abſconſa & improviſa didici. Sap. 7.

To conclude, Be wiſe, and you ſhall ſee all the Accidents of Danger before they come; nor will you ſtudy, as others do, to give them a Repulſe when preſent, but go and meet them afar off, to prevent them with little Pains: You will do, in relation to domeſtick Troubles, what *Solomon* did mi-

miraculouſly in relation to contagious and ſtormy blaſts of Air; he knew the Art, how to go and find them in their Caves, and there to diſpel them: He knew the Art, how to make Health, Happineſs, and Abundance reign in his Provinces, when at the ſame time other Nations pined with Famine, or periſhed by Diſeaſes.

MAXIM II.

Stultus illudet peccatum: & inter Juſtos morabitur gratia. Prov. 14.

PARAPHRASE.

Sin is pleaſing to all at the time of committing it, but when once committed, the Wiſe man grieves and afflicts himſelf bitterly for it; the Weak and Scrupulous deſpairs; he that is hardened and impudent mocks at it, and wonders at the tenderneſs of thoſe good Men that pity him, and talk of Repentance.

Of all the Diſeaſed, thoſe that are moſt to be pitied, are ſuch as pity not themſelves, but are in love with their Diſtem-

per : Let us hate ours, Hatred is its Remedy, and a ſign that we are not forſaken, but that Heaven has yet Deſigns of Mercy for us.

REFLECTIONS.

It is the ordinary Cuſtom of Men to apply themſelves with great aſſiduity to uſeleſs and idle trifles, and to take no manner of care for things of the higheſt importance.

You beſtow a great expence in the Habits you wear, and take a great deal of pains to dreſs your ſelf handſomly, that you may appear pleaſing in the Eye of the World, and never ſo much as think of healing that horrid Canker, that eats into your Face, the loathſomneſs of which makes every one flee your company, and renders you hideous and inſupportable to all that ſee or come near you.

To what end ſerves all this expenſive Bravery ? What good do theſe precious Movables of your Chamber, with this magnificence of your Bed, do you, if in the midſt of all theſe Riches, and ſo much coſtly Gaiety, deſigned for the ſweetning of your

your Sleeps, you feel the Stone within you tearing with its ſharp points your Intrails, and forcing you to cry out like to a Criminal on the Rack? I mean, if in the height of the Proſperity and Honours of your Family you feel the Sting of Mortal Sin that diſappoints your reſt; and if you muſt hear night and day the dreadful Crys of your wounded Conſcience, which puts you in mind of the approach of Death, and of Eternal Miſery. *Dum ad ſpecioſa tormenta alligatus: ſub ingenti titulo Cruciaris.*

No certainly, Sin is not an Evil of ſmall importance, to be neglected or made ſport withal.

There is not a Wiſe Man upon the Earth, that would not chuſe to loſe his Goods and Life, nor a Saint in Heaven that would not renounce his *Paradiſe*, to go and ſuffer eternally in *Hell*, rather than to commit a Mortal Sin.

It is ſaid of the *Seraphins*, That they were grieved they ever had a Being, when they firſt ſaw Sin to grow amongſt them; and that they became the Companions of Sinners.

What St. *Paul* ſaid in the Tranſports of his Love, was no leſs ſeraphical nor admirable; That it would be more eaſie for him to periſh himſelf, and be put in the number of the Reprobate, than to ſee thoſe Sins in the Hearts of Chriſtians, which they ſee in themſelves, and ſuffer to remain there without remorſe. He ſaid this from the bottom of his Heart, becauſe he underſtood the two eſſential Properties of Man's Sin, which are no leſs than to be the death of an immortal Soul, and the true Cauſe of the death of a God, a *Paricide* and a *Deicide*.

There have been ſome converted Sinners ſo divinely illuminated, and ſo clear ſighted in the foulneſs of Sin, as that after having mingled with their Food Aſhes and their Tears, and after having ſuffered the ſevereſt Auſterities in their Bodies for ſeveral years, not thinking they had yet ſatisfied for their Sins, have wiſhed to go and ſuffer the Torments of Hell, there to finiſh the time of their Penance. It would be a long Work to collect what the Fathers have writ, and to conſider all they have obſerved hereupon; it will be ſufficient

cient for you to know his Mind, who is the *Maſter of Saints*, and what his Thoughts are of you and your Sins, and how he comes to know them; but then you muſt interrogate him thereupon, and he will anſwer.

To learn this well, your beſt way is, not to have recourſe to the great Doctors, you will gain this Science ſooner in Solitude than in the Schools: Whoever you are, that have ſpent ſeveral years in thinking of other things than your Salvation, and matters of Eternity, do not deny your Conſcience three or four days time, to hear what it will ſay to you from God on this mighty Subject, and to learn of it the explication of theſe few words of St. *Denis*, *Lux in ſe Notitiam Tenebrarum Habet; That Light contains in itſelf the knowledge of Obſcurity, that in ſeeing and knowing itſelf, it knows what is Darkneſs.*

St. *Denis* means, That God has the ſame thoughts of Man's Sins that the Sun would have of Night, could he but ſee and know himſelf; undoubtedly, though there be nothing of Darkneſs in the Sun, yet had he Eyes and Underſtanding, as he muſt ſee be-

beyond any Perſon, that his Light is the moſt perfect of all viſible Beauties, ſo he muſt needs ſee alſo beyond any, that there is no Deformity ſo dreadful, or ſuch an Enemy to the Eyes, as the Night: Altho' he had never been acquainted with her, nor had ever ſeen her, his own perfect Brightneſs would ſuffice him, to know and meaſure her truly by.

Nothing is ſo certain, as, That in God there is not any Spot or Sin, but that He is all Infinite Light and Brightneſs; and yet with this pure and impeccable Eſſence it is that He ſees what Sin is beyond what all Men in their ſinful and corrupt Nature ever did ſee.

I leave you here to your ſelf, O Chriſtian Soul, lift up your Eyes, and contemplate privately upon this Divine Truth, That God, by his own Holineſs, knows your Sinfulneſs, examines, conſiders, and comprehends all the degrees of it. By this it is that he meaſures what you are at the time of your Diſorders; and as He ſees an infinite Beauty and Greatneſs in His Divine Perfections, ſo He beholds with an infinite Horror and Infamy your Guilty Actions:

He

He meaſures your Station by his own, and finds, that as high as He is exalted in Greatneſs and Glory, by the ſublime elevation of his Wiſdom and of his Love to his Eternal Word, ſo low, by forſaking Him, are you ſunk and fallen into the deep Abyſs of Darkneſs and Nothingneſs. He ſees both the one and the other in the ſame Viſion.

"What do you mean, O Great God, crys out *David*, trembling with Apprehenſion, "*Poſuiſti iniquitates Noſtras in Conſpectu* "*tuo*; Muſt it be by ſuch a ſhining Light "that you behold and conſider the Foul- "neſs and Infamy of our Miſerable Life, "and muſt the Ages of our Ingratitude be "amidſt the Splendor of your Paradice, "one of the Spectacles of your Eternity? "*Sæculum Noſtrum in illuminatione vultus* "*tui.* In this manner God knows what paſſes within you, and thus He thinks of any of the leaſt of your Sins.

But then, how many does He ſee of theſe! look into your ſelf whilſt He looks into you, and ſee in your Soul what He ſees there, that innumerable company of Inveterate Sins, that heap of Old and New Corruption. All theſe Black Objects that God

God contemplates in you, contemplate them, I ſay, in your ſelf, and let nothing be hidden from you. He knows your Thoughts, do you know his, and conſider what He intends; at leaſt, ſee what hangs over your Head, at the time that I am ſpeaking to you; His Juſtice, with Pen in Hand, that obſerves you, and writes; His Mercy, that is leaving you, and ready to deliver you up to Death: they, by their interiour Voices, both reproach you with what you are at preſent, and tell you what you ſhall be to morrow, or this night, or perhaps within an hour, unexpectedly, in the height of your Honours and your Pleaſures, Dead, Judged, Damned; in three minutes ſpace this great Change will be made, and made for ever: *Velut Somnium Avolans non invenieris & qui te Viderint dicent, ubi eſt.*

It is God that ſpeaks to you, weigh his Words, meditate and grant to your Conſcience that Solitude and Privacy which it begs of you, to the end it may be heard upon this Subject, and that you may conſult with it.

The

The Queſtion is, Whether you will continue, by a deſperate Choice, in the deplorable ſtate in which you are, or get the ſooneſt you can out of it, by the means of doing Penance.

Perhaps neither the one nor the other will pleaſe you, and your Anſwer will be made only in Tears, like a Sick body that is given over, and lies on his Bed toſſing from one ſide to the other, ſending out Groans and Lamentations. *Quo Ibo?*

It may chance to come into your Head to do like that Sinner the Prophet ſpeaks of, which is to learn whether there be any Corner of the World where God is not, and where you may neither be ſeen by him, or perſecuted by the reach of his Voice: *Quo Ibo à Spiritu tuo, & quo à facie tua fugiam?* Alas, Lord, ſays he, you that know all things, know you not what it is to be ſeen by a God, with all our Sins about us? what it is to be called to a Holy Life by ſo many ſtrong and inviting Inſpirations, whilſt long Habits and Cuſtoms have chained us to the World, and whilſt a cruel and invincible Paſſion has engag'd us in the love of the Creatures. Great God,

God, continues he, have Pity on me; I desire but this Favour of you, that you will tell me, you that only know it, to what part of the Universe I may flye, to be hid from the Sight of your Eyes, and freed from hearing the Threats of your Justice, with the Calls and Pursuits of your Love. *Quo Ibo à Spiritu tuo ?*

Behold here a strange Design, to ask of God himself what you must do, and whither you must go, to flee away from him: But what outdoes this, is, that God does not refuse to give his Answer to such a Question, with Advice upon it.

The Answer which he gives, and which I address to you, O Christian Soul, is, That you must go to the place where Mercy dwells, upon *Mount Calvary*; and provided that you then say what is fit to be said to that Supream Mercy, and that you will let it work its Pleasure on your Heart, there you will find the Quiet and Security you seek.

MAXIM III.

Donec Aſpiret dies, & inclinentur Umbræ Vadam ad Montem Myrrhæ & ad Collem thuris. Cant. iv.

PARAPHRASE.

Until ſuch time as the Shades vaniſh, and that the Daybreak of a Bleſſed Eternity does appear, I will go ſolitarily up upon the Mountain of Myrrhe, and the Hill of Frankincenſe, and contemplating on Eternal Truths, will from thence raiſe my ſelf up to God by Prayer and Penitence, and be like the Incenſe, which in mounting to the Skies, deſtroys and conſumes it ſelf in its own Flames.

REFLECTIONS.

It is not my Voice, O Chriſtian Soul, nor the Voice of Man, but ſomewhat more powerful, and more worthy to be hearkened to, that calls you up to *Mount Calvary*, and expects you there, it being the only place where you can calm all the Motions of

of your Soul, and ſetle your ſelf in the Happy Condition which you ſeek.

When you are there, ſpare not to utter quickly all that your Grief ſhall ſuggeſt to you to ſay, and proceed in complaining of that fatal Impulſe, as you count it, which carries you continually to the love of your Sins, notwithſtanding you are continually in the Eye of your God, and perſecuted by his Calls and Threats : *Quo Ibo à Spiritu tuo, & quo à facie tua fugiam ?*

After this lift up your Eyes, and contemplate upon him you ſee ſtretched on the Croſs before you, you will diſcover in his opened Heart a Mercy which diſcerns Sinners, it is true, but beholds them to no other end, than to proportion the Pardon it deſigns them to the greatneſs of their Faults: You will find *then*, this God you flie, purſues you only, that He may make you capable of enjoying *one day* an Eternal Felicity, in the room of that Puniſhment you have deſerv'd at his Hands, and which you can never eſcape, but by having recourſe to his Croſs.

Conſider with your ſelf, that the loweſt and the vileſt Condition a Man can be in

is

is the ſtate of great Sinfulneſs; and the higheſt Condition a God can be in, is that of great Mercifulneſs.

To theſe two Extreams were GOD and Man come, the one of heighth, the other of lowneſs, on the day of the *Paſſion*; Man, by ſpilling the Blood of his crucified Saviour; and God the Father, by ſeeing and ſuffering that precious Blood to flow. Here is matter for you to contemplate and ſtay upon a while.

I have not much to ſay to you on my part, the Prophet *David* has included whatſoever can be or ought to be ſaid on this Subject, in theſe few words, That *there is in Man great Sin, and in GOD great Mercy.*

Great Sins are ſuch as are committed contrary to the moſt holy Laws of Nature, and which ſpring in the Heart of Ingrateful Man after Baptiſm, during the heighth of the Favours and Benefits of his Redemption: They are ſuch as are renewed after Pardons received, and Promiſes made of Repentance; ſuch as are multiplied by continual Relapſes, as are fortified by Impunity, are hardned by Chaſtiſe-

ments, and ſuch as ſcandalouſly encreaſe under the weight of Sickneſs, Misfortune, and Malediction, mocking at the Authority and Threats of Juſtice. In fine, great Sins are ſuch as put a Man alive into the Beginning Flames of Hell, when ſharp Sorrows and a deſpairing Remorſe ſeize on the Heart of a Sinner, and that to get ſome Eaſe, he falls into that deſperate Frenzy of imagining he is got out of the Reach of God Almighty's Hand, which makes him ſtand at defiance with Heaven, and abandon himſelf to all the wicked Effects of Atheiſm and Brutality. *Opprimamus Juſtum nec Parcamus viduæ : Impleamus nos Vino : Nullum ſit prætum quod non pertranſeat luxuria noſtra.*

Great Mercy is that, which beholds this Spectacle with an Eye of Compaſſion, and efficaciouſly undertakes to afford a Remedy. To effect this, it aſſembles what is moſt ſtrong and attractive in the Conquering Grace of the Holy Ghoſt, of which it frames a Light like to the Morning *Aurora*. By the means of ſuch a Light ſpread over the Face of the moſt ſtupified Sinners, this Divine

Quaſi antelucanum illumino.

vine Mercy gets into their Eyes without Violence or Trouble, and breaking the Fetters of their Dead Sleep, awakens and illuminates them, makes them in an inſtant ſee the Beauties of Virtue, and calls and draws them to it; then this Mercy it ſelf entring into them with its divine Attractives, and becoming Miſtris of their Hearts, engages them, by an irrevocable reſolution, to the performance of Acts of Penance and Sanctity. *Corruſcaſti, & ſplenduiſti, & Rupiſti Surditatem meam.* S. Aug.

O Great and Adorable Mercy, which ſets no Limits to the extent of its Benefits! which has not ſeen in Six thouſand Years the Crime committed on the face of the Earth, that it was not ready to pardon, if the Sinner were ready to repent and accuſe himſelf of it! which does not ſee any ſuch in Hell amongſt all the Blaſphemies and execrable Impieties of that place, that it would not now be ready to forgive, if the Devils and the Damned would ſtoop from their Pride to ask that Grace, and draw from their Hearts an Act of Humility and Contrition! How many are the Sins, O Chriſtian Soul, that your Life numbers

ſince you were firſt a Sinner, and how many have the Favours of God been ſince that time! Has there a day paſſed in which this loving Father of his prodigal Children has not been watching for you, and looking about to offer you his Hand, that He might draw you out of the Pit you were fallen into, from the Gates of Death and Hell, and out of the Bonds of the Devil?

In a word, There is great Sin and foul Ingratitude in Man, and in GOD great and high Mercy.

Conſider then, if you think good, what you have to do in this Caſe, and which of the two Reſolutions you ought to take; whether to flee as you purpoſed, ſo far from God that you might be out of the call of his Voice, running where Deſpair and Blindneſs will lead you; or, whether you will turn home to that Mercy which ſtretches out its Arms to you, and calls you to your Salvation. Conſider, I ſay, and chuſe.

Chuſe! Alas, ſaid St. *Peter*, *Ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ æternæ habes:* Grace and Life, O Divine Saviour, are between your

your Lips, ready to be poured forth on miſerable Man, my Heart longs for both: I am a Sinner, *Death* and *Sin* are in me, and ſtop my Breath: there remains for me but a moments ſpace of Life, and then follow Pains to Eternity: Whither ſhall I go to ſeek for Remedy? Whither can I, unleſs I go to you? *Verba vitæ æternæ habes.* Examine well theſe few words, and try to hear what is ſaid to you thereupon from above: for my part, I have nothing more to ſay, than what you have newly heard; you have great Sins upon you, and you ſtand in need of great Mercy; go up to *Mount Calvary*, there is no other place where it may be found, or where you ought to ſeek it.

True it is, that you are there accuſed of having ſhed the Blood of your Saviour, and of having been the Executioner that has crucified him: There you are ſhewn, on the top of a Tree, the moſt enormous Crime that ever was committed, and it is laid to your charge; but be not frighted, only be ſure, as ſoon as you appear before the Crucifix, to let the Truth iſſue from your Heart, and out of your Mouth: con-

feſs that you are the Guilty One againſt whom both Heaven and Earth call out for Vengeance, *Iniquitatem meam Ego Cognoſco*; you will ſtrait find there will come Mercy out of the Heart of God, to meet and embrace you, and He will join his Grace on your Lips, to the Confeſſion of your Faults, and the Truth of your Sorrow: *Miſericordia & veritas obviaverunt ſibi.*

Speak out then, own your Crime, and ſay with *David*, *Peccatum meum Contra me eſt ſemper.* True it is, O Lord, that my great Sin, which contains all the infinite multitude of my Offences, is preſent with you on the Croſs, but then your great Mercy is with you there too: it is by that Standard you will meaſure the deſigns of your Heart towards me; and it is with it you will conſult, to learn what Anſwer you ſhall return to my Tears: *Miſerere mei ſecundum magnam Miſericordiam tuam.* I implore not the Mercy of Angels or Saints, or of a God all Glorious in Heaven, my Need reaches to the want of the Greateſt and Supreme Mercy, and that is not to be had but from a God upon the Croſs, whom I have put to death, He is the Only

Only One that muſt renew my Life: Unite thoſe innumerable Pardons and Favours which you have granted to *all Sinners* ſince the beginning of the World; O unite them all at preſent into one, for me alone; *Secundum multitudinem Miſerationum tuarum:* In me you behold all the Sinners that ever were; therefore I muſt ſeek in you for all that Goodneſs, and all that Love, that has converted them all even to this day: O my divine Saviour, glorifie your Omnipotence, and ſhew what a God can do for ſo loſt a Creature, and how his Grace can raiſe a quite dejected Heart.

Entertain theſe kind of Thoughts in your Mind as much as you are able, and by the number of your Acts of Contrition, encourage the *Divine Mercy*, to ſhowre on you its *Numerous Benedictions.*

MAXIM IV.

Vadam ad Collem Thuris. Cant. iv.

PARAPHRASE.

I will go up to the Hill of Frankincenſe, and there by Prayer and Penitence will I raiſe my ſelf ſo high, as to get into the Wounds of Jeſus Chriſt; and I will grave ſo deep in my Soul the Characters of his Sufferings, that no other Life ſhall be left me, but what I breath out of his Heart.

REFLECTIONS.

See here the Method you are to obſerve whilſt your Solitude gives you the leiſure to hearken to your Conſcience, and to mind what it will ſay to you: Tell often to your ſelf the Story of your wretched Days, and let not ſo much as one of thoſe dreadful occaſions ſlip from you, which has engaged you in Wicked Company: call to mind each Fault, and over each weep and lament: Perform thoſe Acts of Contrition,

trition, that may make you worthy the Grace that has drawn you out of Hell, which the death of Chriſt has merited for you.

Say to him, *That which afflicts me moſt, (O Lord) touching my enormous Crimes, is, that my Heart is weak, and has not ſtrength enough to hate them. Alas, Lord, mine alone can be but poor in Sorrow, poor, tho' I had the Hearts of my Confeſſors to help me, who have known and lamented them together with me: by my Goodwill I would have the Hearts of all Men and Angels, and out of this Multiplicity of Hearts would I collect and frame a hatred and deteſtation of my Ingratitude, that ſhould be great enough to make them equal to my Grief and Miſery:* Cor mundum Crea in me Deus; *Employ, O Lord, your Power and your Mercy; create a new Heart, and beſtow it on me, with which I may ſatisfie you, and love you.*

With this deſire our Saviour will be pleaſed, as he was with that of *David*, St. *Peter*, and other Converted Sinners, who after having employ'd Years in lamenting and weeping, when their Tears were

were quite exhauſted and ſpent, did ſeek to know, whether the World could not afford the Means to raiſe within their Souls a Spring of theſe bitter Waters, ſuch as ſhould never ſtop, but laſt to the very end of their days: *Quis dabit Capiti meo Aquam, & Oculis meis fontem lachrymarum?*

Say you the ſame thing, contemplating on your crucified Lord, and ſay it with Sincerity, and from the bottom of your Heart; let Sighs of Love expreſs it inſtead of Words; *Quis dabit Capiti meo?* How happy ſhould I be, could I ſhed Torrents of Tears to joyn with the Torrent of my Saviour's Blood, ſuch as ſhould flow in every place where I have committed Faults, to ſhew, where-ever I have Sinned, that I have Sorrowed, and given laſting Marks of my Repentance. O all ye People, who have heard of the Scandals of my paſt Life, come and hear my mournful Cries, come and behold my Sorrows! behold them you, my God, and ſee how my Conſcience ſuffers: in you I hope, even in the Condition I am fallen into, be you ſo good

Audite Populi & Videte dolorem meum.

good as to grant me your Love in the ſame meaſure ; at leaſt, look on me, thus as I am, and let that Virtue iſſue from your Eyes, which can give Grace and Life. *Vide Domine & Conſidera.*

This God, who ſees and hears you during theſe holy moments in which your Griefs renew, and that you feel the Convulſions of your afflicted Conſcience, will not fail to comfort you, by his repeating to you interiourly, what has been ſo often told you by his Prophets and Evangeliſts, that your Sins are blotted out, and forgiven, and that not one ſpot of them remains in your Soul.

Thus much I know, O my Divine Saviour, but ſtill the memory of them is remaining in your Mind.

Alas, Great God, how inſufficient it is for my Comfort to be told I am forgiven! To make this perfect, you that can be ignorant of nothing, muſt find out ſome means to be ignorant of my Miſdeeds, and to forget whatſoever has befallen me in the time of my wretched and ſcandalous days.

For how is it poſſible to live in the preſence of a God, who has ſeen my Treacheries, and bears them ſtill in mind! how is it poſſible to be comforted, tho' I am daily told the News from him, that my Sins have been waſhed with his Blood! when at the ſame time my Reaſon informs me, that they appear yet before his Eyes, that they will ever appear, and that the Ages of my Ingratitude muſt, amidſt the Glories of his *Paradiſe*, be one of the Objects of his Eternity! *Poſuiſti iniquitates Noſtras in Conſpectu tuo, ſæculum Noſtrum in illuminatione Vultus tui.*

God, who with a Complacence obſerves theſe Fears and Diſquiets within you, will give them a Remedy to make your Conſolation entire.

For whilſt you are breathing out your Complaints in this familiar way, when he comes once to comfort you, He will do it certainly like a God, and ſtretch his Power miraculouſly ſo far, as even to forget all, and bury the whole Memory of your Sins in the Ocean, whence it ſhall never riſe again: *Diſponet iniquitates Noſtras & projiciet*

jiciet in profunda Maris omnia peccata Noſtra, quoniam Volens eſt miſericordiam.

MAXIM V.

Generoſitatem illius Glorificat, Contubernium habens Dei. Sap. viii.

PARAPHRASE.

The Greatneſs and the Eminence of Grace are glorified by the Man that lives familiarly with God.

REFLECTIONS.

A principal Duty it ſhould be in devout and holy perſons, to add a Luſtre and Glory to Sanctity; but there are many of them that do much otherwiſe, and who, we muſt confeſs, give by their Indiſcretions too much Ground to Libertines, for their contempt of this Divine Virtue,

I cannot tell whether this proceeds from an innocent Ambition to imitate the Saints in thoſe Actions wherein they are moſt inimitable, and miraculous; but this I can tell,

tell, that it brings no Honour to Sanctity, to be more Saint-like than God approves. It fares with Holineſs as it does with Wiſdom; whoſoever has too much of either, falls very ſhort of having enough.

Non plus ſapere quam oportet, Sapere ad ſobrietatem.

This *too much* is the thing, I may boldly ſay, that diſhonours Chriſtian Piety, and is the cauſe it meets with ſo little reſpect in all Companies in the World. The Misfortune comes not by the Devotion of ſuch as are diſcreet and holy, but by the true Folly of ſuch as are ſcrupulous, and the Falſe Sanctity of ſuch as are Hypocrites.

To be of an Humour not to be ſatisfied but by taking by-ways to go to Heaven, and building upon Rules which are Strangers to the Churches Morals, and to all Divinity; to be perſwaded, that to break a day of *Lent* in the time of a dangerous Sickneſs, is a high and guilty Frailty; that it is not to dye like a Chriſtian, or a Choſen One, unleſs Death comes by the Violence of Mortifications, and unleſs a Man inflicts on himſelf as much as ever Tyrants did upon the Martyrs they have made.

Theſe

Theſe ſort of Principles, and others like them, preached up by the *Montainiſts* and *Novatians*, were never any Honour to Devotion or Devout Perſons, though they might be ſo often to their Directors, who have judged them fit Cloaks to hide their growing Hereſies, and who by ſhewing to us Devotees ruin'd in the Health both of Body and Mind, by their Watchings and Faſts, pretend to give us infallible Proofs of the Holy Lives of their Teachers, and Sanctity of their Doctrine.

Be devout: but in caſe you cannot be ſo, without rendring Devotion either falſely commendable or truly ridiculous and contemptible, never pretend to it at all. Bring not into the Sanctuary, under the Title of a *Mortified* and *Spiritual Man*, ſuch Defects as will make the Wiſe to laugh at you, as well as others, and Condemn you againſt their Wills: it is a matter of Shame, that happens almoſt every day, even in the moſt modeſt Converſations, never to hear the Devout ſpoken of, but that it is with ſome Cenſure of their Carriage.

Make

Make not one in the number of thoſe that are the cauſe of this, as you will infallibly do, if you go about to ſquare your Devotions to certain ways of living, ſuch as the Tongues of Libertines have Right to make ſport with, and the truly Pious are obliged in Conſcience to condemn.

Of this number you will certainly be, if at your return from your long Contemplations made at the Feet of the Altar you bring home with you the Uneaſineſs of your Melancholy and Fantaſtical Humour. One of the chief Rules of eminent Sanctity is, That we muſt live in our Family after the manner that an Angel would live there; if this be too hard for you, yet live in it like a Reaſonable Man, at leaſt, live not there like a Wild Beaſt, giving your Domeſticks occaſion to complain of you each hour of the day, and attribute to you, what was ſaid of a great Devotee of old, That the more he Faſted and Prayed, the more inſupportable he became.

Call to mind, that there is no other true Saint in the World, but he that underſtands true Charity and true Civility to be one and the ſame Virtue.

Be-

Beware, above all things, of what happens frequently in the Carriage of ſome Spiritual Perſons, that you do not rank your Diſobedience and Opiniatrety in the number of your Virtues and Duties, and that you do not fix your Aim upon Superſtitious Ways and Courſes.

Repel with vigor all Follies ſeizing on the Imagination, ſuch as are *Illuſions*, *Anxieties*, and *Diſquiets*, cauſed by the Dreams of Fancy: Suffer not any empty Fear, or Vapour raiſed from the Earth, to mingle with your Thoughts, where God would ſee only what is Divine.

Fear *Mortal Sin*, and flye it more than you would do *Death*, but be not frighted with the Name and Shew of Sin. The Devil, to fright poor fearful Woman, makes uſe of the moſt innocent and harmleſs things, and gives them often the Reſemblance of Mortal Sins: fear them not, nor make the Wiſe laugh at your Deceit and Weakneſs, as you would do at a Child, who ſhould be frighted at the ſight of a Marble Serpent on a Fountain; for as there is nothing leſs venomous or dangerous than theſe Dragons and Monſters of

Braſs and Marble, made to adorn the Palaces of Princes, ſo there is nothing leſs Sin and Impurity than thoſe Viſions and Ghoſts of Sin, with which the Devil uſes to haunt the Imaginations of the chaſteſt Virgins; they ſigh, and grieve, and are ready to deſpair at them, believing they are damned: the Indevout ſeeing this, mock at it; let it have your Compaſſion, but imitate them not: raiſe your Courage high enough to ſlight theſe interiour Goblins.

Freedom, Tranquility, Courage, and Wiſdom are the Companions of true Devotion, and muſt enter along with it into your Soul: At leaſt it is true what a Holy Father ſaid excellently well; That to become devout, is to receive by the Benefit of Grace all that Vigour and thoſe Good Qualities which Nature had denied us at our Birth. It would be a wonderful Misfortune to have the contrary befal you; and having been a Man of good Senſe when you dealt in the Affairs of the World, you ſhould now, after having ſeriouſly reſolved to give your ſelf to God, begin the Exerciſes of a Good Life, by becoming uncivil, ſhy, dreaming, and fantaſtical.

Where

Where Grace is, there ſhould not be wanting any one Beauty or Greatneſs that befits an Immortal Soul; and yet we ſee great Sinners, who ſhew, in the Face of the World, to have Honour and Courage, whilſt Perſons of devotion make it none of their *Duty* to correct the *Defects* of their timerous Nature.

The true Means to unite within us thoſe Perfections I have named, and to accompliſh a Spiritual and Chriſtian Life with Honour and Glory, is to obſerve well what this Text of *Solomon* teaches, being one of the choiceſt things he has written, and to make it our principal care and buſineſs to converſe daily with God, and practiſe a familiarity in his Preſence; *Generoſitatem illius glorificat Contubernium habens Dei.*

True it is, that God is your Lord and Maſter, and that the Rank you hold before him ſhould put you in the humbleſt place, under his Feet, and even below a Nothing, if that were poſſible: but yet notwithſtanding, when you come to love him, and that with *Mary Magdalen*, during the converſation of one Heart with another,

ther, you poſſeſs the high Privileges near him that belong to a Lover; that Glorious Quality gives you a Right to behold Him as your Equal, and to ſay boldly to Him, *Dilectus meus mihi & ego illi: My Beloved is mine, and I am his.*

In the Church, and at the times of *Sacrifice* and *Adoration*, let your Submiſſion and Reſpects ſhew you to be a poor Shadow in his Sight; but in other places, and at times of liberty, accuſtom your ſelf to treat with him as you do with thoſe that love you, and whom you love; He is near you, as they are; tell Him the ſame things you would ſay to them; acquaint Him with your Affairs and Deſigns, your Hopes and your Fears, and all that relates to you; get to have the moſt intimate familiarity with Him, and the moſt ſecret communication that is poſſible; ſay to Him whatſoever the Tranſports of Love ſhall draw from your Heart, and fear nothing ſo much as to be daunted in the preſence of this Spouſe, ſince nothing more diſpleaſes Him in a Holy Soul, than the *trembling Fits of Diſtruſt*, and the *Diſquiets of a Scrupulous Conſcience.*

True

True it is, that he is to be ſoveraignly reſpected; yet ſince it is His Will to love you, and that He will have you love him tenderly and divinely, all the Honour He expects from you, is to have you converſe with Him, as you would do with one that loves you, and to tell him your Thoughts with all the Freedom of a true Affection and Confidence. Acquaint Him then with all the Paſſages that relate to you, altho' he knows them before. It is from your ſelf that He would hear them. As much God as he is, it concerns him to know this from you, becauſe He loves you, and that whatſoever touches you, becomes the Buſineſs and the Intereſt of his Love.

I maintain then, That it is this Converſation with God that glorifies Devotion in you, that makes the Force, the Beauty and Excellence of it appear, and compels even the proudeſt Sinners to honour and eſteem it.

The reaſon of it is, That at the time of this interiour Converſe God does ſpeak to you, not by Dreams in the Night, as to *Joſeph*, nor by a loud Voice, heard by many, as to St. *Paul*, but as to a beloved

Spouſe, by Words immediately iſſuing from his Heart, ſuch as are formed out of the Sighs of him that does pronounce them; that is to ſay, by Breathings and Impreſſions altogether divine.

In a word, God obſerves towards us, in theſe Converſations, the ſame Method we uſe to a Friend, when we have a Secret to impart in the preſence of Company that ſhould not hear it.

Taking him apart, and putting our Mouth cloſe to his Ear, we whiſper to him ſo ſoftly, and ſo near, that our Breath enters with the Words into his Ear, and that at the ſame time he hears us, he receives in the warmth and other impreſſions of our Breath. *Ducam eam in Solitudinem & loquar ad Cor ejus: I will lead her into Solitude, and will ſpeak to her Heart.*

Thus God deals when he would inform any Holy Soul how he ſhould act on every occaſion: He treats with her of all Matters neceſſary for her to know, and upon each communicates His Secret Thoughts, but does it ſo ſoftly, and ſo truly, by the way of one Heart's entertaining another, that

that He is not heard but of her ſelf. *It is not only,* ſays the Prophet, *a Voice that ſpeaks, but withal,* Quaſi Sibulus auræ tenuis, *it is, as it were, a Divine Breath of Air, that enters, and ſpreads it ſelf deliciouſly over the Perſon's Heart, and which, beſides the Light and Inſtructions it affords, brings alſo the Force and Ardour needful for Execution.*

I ſay, it brings the Force, and other Celeſtial Qualities: for, as the Diſcourſes of this Incomparable Lord and Maſter are properly but the Breathings of his Heart, and the Impreſſions of his Love, ſo they are alſo, properly ſpeaking, but the Emanations of his Wiſdom, Intelligence, and Goodneſs, which entring into us, at the times of this Glorious Union and Communication of Hearts, does pour into us, with his Orders, all the Vigour, Grace, and Sanctity that a God can beſtow.

Theſe Breathings and Inſpirations from the Holy Ghoſt, which, St. *Bernard* ſays, on the day *Adam* was formed, being convey'd into a Statue of Dirt, made an Immortal Soul

Inſpiravit in faciem ejus ſpiraculum Vitæ.

Soul riſe there, and a lively Image of the Divinity, which being ſpread over the Face of *Moſes*, on *Mount Sinai*, transformed him into the brightneſs of an Angel, *Ex Conſortio ſermonis Dei*, which being poured into the Breaſts of the Apoſtles, made the Holy Ghoſt to enter into their Souls with the Power of forgiving Sins, and curing all Human Maladies. It will be theſe that during thoſe precious Moments you employ in the Boſom of your beloved Spouſe, will quite drive out of your Heart all Weakneſs, Cowardice, Illuſion, and Ignorance, and make ſuch Perfections and Graces ſpring up in their room, as will cauſe you to be beloved of Men and Angels. Come into Company after this, you that have given the Worldlings occaſion to contemn a Devout Life, and you will be ſure to appear before them in ſuch a Condition, and with thoſe Qualities, as ſhall compel this blind World to open its Eyes, and confeſs, That a Devotion adorned with the Grace of Jeſus Chriſt, embelliſhes our Nature, and that of all the Perſons we love and admire, none de-

Inſufflavit dicens Accipite Spiritum Sanctum.

deſerve to be loved and admired like thoſe that are truly devout. *Generoſitatem illius Glorificat Contubernium habens Dei.*

Obſerve withal, ſince we are upon the Subject of a happy Devotion, that the Priviledge I am ſpeaking of, (whoſe Method is, to live familiarly with God) is ſo extraordinary, that it ſeldom meets with a Refuſal of any thing you ask, either for your ſelf, or ſuch as have a Share in your Prayers.

I ſay no more than this of it, That it falls out with God as it doth with Kings. The only way to gain a Power in Courts (Experience teaches us) is to become familiar there, and obtain the Priviledge of ſpeaking our Minds with an entire Freedom.

How often do we ſee there Perſons of High Rank and Merit making the moſt reſpectful Addreſſes, and uſing the moſt moving Speeches, to gain their reaſonable Requeſts, who yet come away without obtaining any thing; when at the ſame time a *Sunamite*, or a *Heſter*, who has found the way to touch the Heart, and to become familiar, carries the Day, and obtains

tains whatſoever ſhe would have; nay, is courted to ſpeak boldly, and name her Inclinations. *Quid habes Eſter & quæ eſt petitio tua? What is it, my dear* Heſter, *you deſire? Etiamſi dimidiam partem regni mei petieris dabitur tibi.*

I deny not, but that humble and fervent Prayers, accompanied by Faſts, by Tears, and other Devotions, ſuch as People uſe in Churches, are very good and excellent, queſtionleſs they are ſo, and many times very efficacious; but the Secrets of God's Wiſdom, and the Reaſons of his Refuſals, we are no ways able to dive into.

I ſay only, it would be an Excellent Means to make your Prayers become efficacious, if, whilſt you enjoy the ſweet of this tender and ſolitary Converſe, reſting in Spirit between the Arms of your Beloved, you ſhould utter with Confidence your Heart, and ſigh out your Wants upon his Breaſt: I ſay, that theſe Sighs would perhaps prevail, before the long Prayers of others, and their Studied Fervors.

But

But take notice, that this is the State of a Soul that loves nothing but God alone : *Delectate in Domino & dabit tibi petitiones Cordis tui : Let us not*, ſays *David*, *approach to God, as Courtiers to their Princes, in expectation of their Bounties.* Look not for any thing when you go to God, beſides the Happineſs of being near him ; let His Preſence be your Hope, your Repoſe, your Life : when God ſhall look into your Heart, and find nothing loved there but Himſelf, it will ſuffice to make your Prayers prevail, if He but ſees in the ſame Heart, or in your Memory, the Impreſſion of thoſe things which have been recommended to you.

MAXIM VI.

Fons vitæ, Eruditio Poſſidentis. Prov. xvi.

PARAPHRASE.

Learning is one of the Fountains of Life to the Man that does poſſeſs it.

Ignorance and Death have a great Reſemblance in many things: the Soul of a Man that knows nothing, is in his Body, as if it were lodged in a Tomb; all the Life he has, is but the Life of a Beaſt, and only a Shadow of Human Life. To be Ignorant, according to the Opinion of the Wiſe Man, is to be a ſort of Creature that ſpends a great deal of Time in paſſing on from his Birth to his Death, without making a Step into Life: *Perierint quaſi non fuerint & Nati quaſi non Nati.*

REFLECTIONS.

As *Knowledge* is one part of our Perfection, ſo it is alſo one part of our Felicity. Make your ſelf then a *Knowing perſon*, ſo far

far at leaſt as you are obliged to be ſuch, by the Laws of Nature, and of Religion, and by thoſe of Decence and Honour. Of what Age ſoever you are at this preſent, and let your Rank be what it will in the World, it is neceſſary, if you will hold the Rank of a Man of Worth, that you be not ignorant either in Philoſophy or in Chriſtian Divinity.

You may know enough of both without putting your ſelf to any great Trouble or Pains, and without running after thoſe Profeſſors, who make a Trade of teaching theſe Noble Sciences. I do not adviſe you to go and ſtudy under them, or to haunt their Schools, but I adviſe you to learn, what you are to think of Eternity, and by what Means you may avoid a Miſery of that duration.

The Maſters that are fitteſt to teach you theſe things, have expected you, for this long time, at leaſt there is no need of your going far to ſeek them, you may find them whereſoever you are your ſelf, and near enough to you, to ſpeak privately to your Heart ; it is but entring within your ſelf, and you may hear what they

will

will ſay. Here follow ſome Reflections that will help you to know theſe Maſters, and to profit by their Diſcourſes.

Mind then, that you no ſooner began to live, but that you were obliged, by the nature of your Birth, to begin to know three Truths; 1. That there is a God that gave you Life. 2. That there is a Nothing, from whence you came, and a Death, to which you are going. 3. That there is a Jeſus Chriſt, who redeemed you, and muſt give you a Reſurrection.

At your coming into the World you have met with three Maſters, or three Voices ordained to teach you theſe three Leſſons: The Voice of Nature, the Voice of Death, and the Voice of the Goſpel and Grace. Theſe are not three Diſcourſes, but three Subjects for your Meditation, that I preſent you with.

In the firſt place, I ſay, That to make your ſelf perfectly knowing in the Morals, it will behove you to become the Diſciple and Scholar of Death, and to take Leſſons from that Maſter.

Death does not ſpeak, but it has a Silence in which is ſummed up all the Doctrine

ſtrine of the Prophets, and Apoſtles, and that contains all thoſe admirable Inſtructions they have left, to aid you in leading a Good Life, and to help you to ſolve well upon every occaſion thoſe Difficulties that ſhall be offer'd to you by your blinded Conſcience. All the Counſels of the Holy Fathers are in the Mouth of Death; what makes the Wonder, is, that Death, without ſpeaking a word, cauſes all thoſe Counſels and Inſtructions to enter into your Heart, and does this in ſuch a way, and with that Force and Energy, which thoſe Holy Fathers could never arrive at. 'Death does this, ſays *Solomon*, every 'time ſhe preſents her ſelf 'before your Eyes, and as often as ſhe invites you to the 'Houſe where ſhe is, and ſhews you in the 'Face of a Dying Perſon the Sentence that 'Heaven has decreed againſt you, That 'you muſt dye, and be to morrow in the 'ſame Condition as you now behold this 'ſick expiring Creature. *Teſtamentum hujus Mundi morte Morieris.*

In ea finis Cunctorum admonetur hominum.

Solomon means, that when Men dye, certain pale Characters appear to be traced upon

upon their Lips, which every one can read, and where they find theſe two words, *Hodie mihi, Cras tibi.* The Prophet calls this their Will or Teſtament, which Death writes for them, and makes their Heirs with thoſe others that encompaſs their Bed, to ſee, and be Witneſſes to it. All read it, and all underſtand it: You, that are the Great Ones of the World, have often read it, and you have learned from thence, ſays St *Gregory*, that the Inheritance which every one of your Anceſtors has left you at the Moment of his Death, has been the News, that you muſt dye as he has done; and that you, and all the Riches, Honours and Greatneſs you now enjoy, muſt in a few days time return to what they have been heretofore, to Duſt, to Aſhes, and to Nothing. *Pulvis es, & in pulverem Reverteris.*

Of all the Forefathers you have had ſince the beginning of the World, there has not been one amongſt them, that has miſſed the Signing of this Teſtament, and the leaving you this Inheritance.

'Such a Teſtament, cries out *Solomon*, 'as a Young Man enriched by the Rapine

'and

and unjuſt dealings of his Father, needs but read with attention, to become the holy and happy Heir of a *Dives* and damned Perſon.

Read then, but obſerve that the great benefit of this Reading. and of this contemplation, does not conſiſt in beholding what Death has ſhewn you, but in remembring that you have ſeen it.

When She has ſhewn you, in the low bottom of a Sepulchre, whole Armies of Worms covering the Face you lately adored, and that She has made you confeſs, that this Rottenneſs was once your Idol; the few Sillables ſhe would have you imprint in your Mind, which contain all her Inſtructions, are, *Memento homo*; *Remember, Young-man, what you have ſeen in this Tomb, and what you have learnt there.*

In truth, to the learning of your Morals perfectly, and how to live Wiſely and Chriſtianly, it will conduce but little, to look on dying and dead People: There is not that Perſon does not go to ſee his Relations and Friends upon their Death-bed, and who, at that time, does not think of the Affairs of another World, and propoſe

to himſelf Deſigns of Converſion and Repentance: but then, by the next Morning we find all theſe Thoughts blotted out of our Minds, like Dreams, and we know nothing of what we ſaw, and what we deſigned Yeſterday. Indevotion, Libertinism, and Vanity, have the ſame ſtation in our Hearts as before, and we begin again to live like Sinners, that had not heard or known that any in the World had ever died.

'O ye Mortals, cries out Death, it is 'not only in the Church, whilſt you are 'ſhedding Tears at the Funeral of your 'Brother, who died Yeſterday ſuddenly, 'without one Word of Confeſſion, after an 'Impenitence for ſeveral Years, that you 'are to ſtudy the Doctrine I teach, but it 'is by remembring this miſerable Exit, '*Memento.* Keep in your Mind the Thought of this Death, and cheriſh the Memory of it, whatſoever Change of Fortune may befal you, or in what part of the World ſoever you may be: carry the Remembrance about with you into all Companies, and converſe with it interiorly: whilſt others are thinking only of laugh-

laughing and diverting themſelves, be you attentive to mind what it will tell you, and to let its Doctrine enter into your Heart.

Doubt not but it will enter; and be you never ſo ignorant at the preſent, within a ſhort time you will have no more need of running after Caſuiſts, to learn what are the obligations of a Chriſtian Life, or to put Queſtions concerning the Duties of your Conſcience; you will know every thing, and be able to anſwer all its Doubts your ſelf: nor will you then have the leaſt Thought of going to the Learned Doctor's with ſuch Diſguiſe, as may make them pronounce you ſafe from your juſt Fears, or endeavour to uſe ſuch Means, as they may counſel you to carry your Sins with you into another World. The Fear of Death firſt introduced Phyſicians, and the Forgetfulneſs of Death Caſuiſts.

In a word, during your Divertiſements in the time of your Affairs, and in every occaſion of your Life, be ſure to keep what I have told you in your Eye: put your Queſtions to Death, and converſe with her, ſhe will make you more knowing in

the Morals than all thoſe Rigorous Teachers, who writ in their Books, and ſpeak in their Sermons ſo many Rare Matters touching dying ſuddenly in an ill ſtate, but who, being once out of the Pulpit, forget all they have ſaid, and lead a Lawleſs Life in Diſorder and Looſeneſs. That would prove a fine Book of Morality for your Cloſet, which the Emperor *Heradius* kept in his, a Death's Head, with theſe three words on the Forehead, *What I am now you will be to morrow.* There is no Difficulty you can have in your Conſcience, that this admirable Caſuiſt will not anſwer in every Point.

MAXIM VII.

Dedit illi Sapientiam Sanctorum, honeſtavit illum in laboribus. Sap. x.

PARAPHRASE.

God has conferred on the Wiſe Man the Science of the Saints, and has employed him glorioufly in ſuch occaſions as have pla-

placed him by the help of that Divine Science in the Rank of Extraordinary Men.

REFLECTIONS.

I have ſaid, That one part of your Happineſs during this Mortal Life, is to be knowing; and that one part of the Knowledge proper for your Calling, is Divinity.

Perhaps this may cauſe your wonder, but nevertheleſs it is a matter you have heard of long ſince, and have begun to practice and undertake many years ago: Have not the firſt Leſſons you have been taught after your coming into the World, and the firſt Pains you have been put to in your Cradle, been to learn the Articles of the chief Myſteries of the Chriſtian Faith?

In ſo much, as that to help you to arrive at that Happy Condition I have been ſpeaking of, all that I ſhall add to the Inſtructions which were given you in thoſe days, is but thus much: O Chriſtian, whoſoever you are, that which came out of your Mouth at your Prayers, when you

were two years old, ſay now the ſame from your Heart, and believe perfectly that which you ſay: for, as all the Leſſons of Death are included in the word *Memento*, in the like manner are all thoſe of the Goſpel included in the word *Crede*, Believe.

Do not imagine, that to become a great and true Divine in the School of Jeſus Chriſt, it will be neceſſary for you to know the Truths of his Doctrine by the Experience of your Eyes, or the Speculation of your Wit, or by the Reaſonings of thoſe Maſters who conſecrate their Days to the penetrating into theſe impenetrable Myſteries.

The moſt Able Maſters know nothing certainly of this Supernatural Divinity, more than what they know by their Faith. And to the end that you may know as much of it as they do, the whole conſiſts in acknowledging ſincerely from the bottom of your Heart, and weighing in your Mind with devout Reflections, that which you learnt hereof in the time of your moſt tender years, and that which the firſt Women came about you did believe for you, when they taught it you. At

At the times of your daily Devotions, do you venerate with an humble ſubmiſſion of your Thoughts, the Propoſitions which the Holy Scripture ſets forth to you, of the Trinity of Perſons, the Incarnation of the Word, the Reſurrection of Mankind, &c. And from that inſtant, when at the proſpect of theſe unſpeakable Myſteries proſtrating your ſelf before the Altar, (your Soul tranſported with Admiration and Love) you ſhall pronounce theſe words, *Credo Domine adjuva incredulitatem meam : I believe, O Lord ; but yet, O Soveraign Diſpoſer of my Life, ſupport you my Weakneſs and Ignorance with the aſſiſtance of your Grace.* I ſay, from that Inſtant you ſhall become a greater Doctor in Divinity than all thoſe learned and proud Profeſſors, who ſpeak like Angels touching the Trinity, but believe what they ſay of it leſs than you do.

A firm Faith, with the Symbole of the Apoſtles imprinted in your Heart by the Finger of the Holy Ghoſt, raiſes you in a moment to that degree of Capacity, that the Angels would aim at, were they to live with us in this World below, and

would they ſtrive to pleaſe God, and be ranked in the number of his Elect. Their Principal Employment, in my opinion, would be the ſame that I invite you to, which is, to meditate on, and ſign by continual Acts of an obedient and blind Love the firſt words of the Teſtament of Jeſus Chriſt ; *In Principio erat Verbum, & Verbum Caro factum eſt.*

I ſay not this to blame the laudable and juſt Curioſity you may have to mind, when you are at Church, what is preached upon theſe Theological Myſteries, or what the Learned ſay of them in their Aſſemblies, or during their private Diſcourſes.

On the contrary, I hold, be you of what Condition you will, That it muſt prove much to your Honour to underſtand them ſo well, as to be able to ſpeak knowingly of them upon occaſion : and I ſay further, that the more advantage you have over the Common Sort, by your Birth and Parts, the greater aptitude you have to comprehend theſe high Verities, and the more Prevailing way of communicating them to others, and of ſetting them forth in Company.

It cannot be other than a very advantageous Sign in a Perſon of Quality, to find his Inclinations lead him to the contemplating the high Myſteries of our Religion, and the endeavouring to find out what lies hidden in the Parables of the Goſpel, and the dark *Enigma's* of the Prophets: Certainly there muſt be ſomething great and noble in that Soul, which is pleaſed with a Contemplation that makes the Delight of the Angels.

The famous Saying of *Tertullian*, That *the Soul of Man is naturally a Chriſtian*, relates particularly to great Souls: if there be any ſuch, they are thoſe that come into the World with a ſecret impreſſion of Veneration towards the Perſon of our Saviour, and with a holy Ambition to raiſe themſelves yet to a higher Perfection, by the knowledge of the greatneſs of his Theology, and of the greatneſs of his Benefits to Mankind.

In Reality, we know that it is He alone that has ennobled our Nature, and that from the loweſt ſtation of the World, into which the Malice of the Serpent had caſt us, even below the baſeſt of Brutes, has in-

infinitely raiſed us, not only above Beaſts, and above the Devils, but above the Angels themſelves, and has given us the Rank of Honour before all Creatures both of this and the other World.

I ſay, infinitely above Beaſts, in that, on the firſt day of our Fall, he did reſtore us to the uſe of Wiſdom, Conſcience, and Moral Goodneſs, with the other Privileges our Condition has above them, Privileges granted by Nature, and loſt by Sin, which He has reſtored us by Grace, and purchaſed back for us with the price of the Blood of a God, the Mark of our Value ever ſince: *O homo, Erige te, tanti Vales.*

I ſay, infinitely above the Devils, in that He has compelled them to adore our Nature in his Perſon, and to become for all Eternity the Worſhipers of a Man-God, to become the Captives of other Men, and even of little Children; ſince we have known ſo many Infant-Martyrs to have conquered them, by the Victorious Grace of that Invincible Redeemer: *Apparuerunt Humiles mei, Filii Puellarum Compunxerunt eos.*

In

In fine, infinitely above the Angels, inaſmuch as he has carried Human Nature up, where it ſits in Triumph upon their Throne, and has not given them in Heaven a *Seraphim*, or any other Spirit of the Prime Orders, but a Man to command them, and be eternally their Sovereign Lord; it being his Will beſides, that other Men ſhould enter into their Fellowſhip, and ſhare with them in their Felicity.

We know alſo His Will to be ſuch, that Men compoſed of Fleſh and Blood, born amongſt Beaſts upon the Earth, and ſubject, as they are, to Death and Rottenneſs: Men that have been dead and buried for many years, and become the Horror and Infection of the World, ſhall riſe out of their Graves, and Mount up to Heaven in Triumph, crowned with the Splendor of Glory and Immortality, that they ſhall enter there with their Bodies, and that the Beauty of their Faces adorned with all Majeſty, by his Redemption, will prove one of the great Ornaments of *Paradiſe*; and that, in fine, they will make ſo admirable an appearance there, as the Angels ſhall

think

think themſelves honoured to paſs their happy Eternity with them.

To know all this, and keep an Indifference, without a deſire of knowing any further, how is it poſſible for any Man that has a ſenſe and feeling in him?

It would be a very hard Law, to tye you up ſo, as that you ſhould have only Acts of Faith in reference to the Perſon of Chriſt, and not have the liberty of enquiring of his Interpreters, touching the Wonders of his Incarnation, and the ſecret ways of his Conduct, which he will have communicated to the Humble, and hid from the Reprobate.

What is blamed in ſome Perſons of Quality of both Sexes, and in others indiſcreetly curious, is, to take upon them to be able to diſpute in the favour of Hereſies, and become Judges and Cenſurers of the Churches Doctrine.

What is moſt juſtly blamed beſides, is the Raſhneſs of ſome, who failing both in Wit and in their Endeavours to know and weigh any thing exactly, will nevertheleſs be ſo bold, as to talk confidently of all matters,

matters, to the ſcandal of the Angels, and thoſe good People which happen to be in their company: Theſe are a ſort of Perſons, who upon the firſt occaſion offered them of venting their Opinions upon any point of the Goſpel, mingle the Errors and Blaſphemies of their Ignoranee and Vanity with the moſt Sacred Truths, and cauſe all this to enter together into the Minds of thoſe ſimple People, that hearken to them and believe them.

Know all you can of the Myſteries of our Faith, let them be the Subject of your Reading, of your Meditation, and of your Study, if you think good: but as to matter of Speaking of them, there is one thing neceſſarily required, that you be wiſe and humble, and have a high Reſpect for your Religion. If it be *thus* with you, you have your Freedom for the reſt; for whilſt you are in this Condition, you will be *ſure* never to ſpeak or hold your Peace, but very fitly.

Obſerve, that here are three different Leſſons; that of Death, *Memento*, *Remember*; that of the Goſpel, *Believe*, *Qui Crediderit ſalvus erit*; and laſtly, that of Na-

Nature, *Behold and look about you ; Peto, Nate, ut in Cœlum & ad terram Aſpicias.*

This third Propoſition will appear more clear from the words of *Solomon*, which follow, and yield more Light to it.

MAXIM VIII.

Mundum tradidit diſputationi eorum, ut non inveniat homo, opus quod operatus eſt Deus ab initio uſq; ad finem.

PARAPHRASE.

God has delivered up the World to the Diſputes of the Learned, but never a one of them is able, by his Conjectures, to reach at that which he would not have known.

REFLECTIONS.

I have ſaid, That the Voice of Nature is to be hearkened to as a Teacher; and you will find by Experience, that you will learn the reſt of your Philoſophy ſooner

ſooner from her, than you can from the Schools, with all their old and new Methods. She does but ſhew you the Heavens and the Earth, with the other Creatures, and by theſe means inſtructs you, that both you and they, with her ſelf, are the Workmanſhip of an Infinite Power, teaching you to read in the Sun and the Stars the firſt words of God the Creator's Teſtament, *In Principio Deus Creavit Cœlum & terram ; In the Beginning God who was, created that which was not.*

Whatever your Quality may be, and the Excuſes you may draw from your Pride, Idleneſs, or Multiplicity of Affairs, do not neglect the ſtudy of this Philoſophy; there is not any thing more honourable than to underſtand it, and diſcourſe handſomly of it; or any thing more eaſie than the learning of it : All that She calls upon you to do, is but to open your Eyes at your *Idle Hours*, and look upon the World ; *Peto, Nate*, ſays ſhe to you, *ut in Cœlum & ad terram aſpicias & ad Omnia quæ in eis ſunt, & intelligas, quia ex Nihilo fecit illa Deus.*

O my Son, I ask but this one thing of you, that you will contemplate the Heavens and the Earth, and that you will let that Light enter into your Mind, which they will produce, and it will not fail to bring along with it Science, Devotion, and Humility.

Open your Eyes then, O Chriſtian, and contemplate; and whilſt do you contemplate, be careful in three matters:

The *Firſt*, To ſee your ſelf with your own Eyes, or to learn by the Report of Credible Perſons the Variety of Things which God has formed in every Element, and in every part of the Univerſe.

The *Second*, To conſider with Wiſe Reflections what is Rare in the Quality and Property of each thing; what the Lands, Rivers, Fountains, Metals, Beaſts, Plants, and the Productions of every Country yield, that is moſt ſingular and curious: in a word, whatever the Eye of Man ſees here below, that is remarkable, to be careful to get a Knowledge of it, if you can poſſibly, and to lay it up as a Treaſure in your Mind, making out of it an inexhauſtible Spring of Natural Curioſi-

ties,

ties, ſuch as may cauſe the Company that hears you talk, to ſay of you what was ſaid of a great King of old, *Impletus eſt quaſi flumen Sapientia* ; 'That at times of 'Converſation there flowed out of his Lips 'Rivers of Science, and an Infinity of Ad-'mirable Things, which raviſh'd the Hea-'rers without ceaſing.

The *Third*, To obſerve in this Variety of Wonders the differing Marks that are ſhewn of the Greatneſs and Beauty of God ; and whilſt you are obſerving, to let your Heart go after the ſweet Attractives of his Grace, which are able to raiſe you up to him, and make you ſay with *David*, in Tranſports of Love and Admiration, *O Lord, O God of gods, how admirable you are, how ſublime and incomprehenſible in your ways, how profound in your deſigns, and mighty in your actions ; how magnificent you are, how amiable and adorable ! Potentiam tuam, & Juſtitiam tuam uſq; in altiſſima : quæ fæciſti magnalia : Deus quis ſimilis tui ?*

This is the Character of a true Philoſophy, to terminate its Speculations by acts of Divine Love, and an encreaſe of Sanctity.

The Character of a falſe and corrupt Philoſophy, is, to terminate its Enquiries by an encreaſe of Preſumption and Ignorance, and by making the Philoſopher become prouder and blinder than he was before his Studies.

Another Difference between theſe two ſo oppoſite Philoſophies, is this; That which I invite you to learn, employs it ſelf in contemplating and admiring what God ſhews us of his Works; the other buſies it ſelf in ſtriving to ſee that which God will not have us ſee, but will have hidden from our Eyes.

Is it not a ſtrange thing? The Divine Wiſdom has ſealed up in darkneſs certain Secrets touching its Productions, not at all material to be known by us, and yet the Philoſophers of this other School will undertake to come to the knowledge of them: God therefore permits them, for their puniſhment, to purſue the Undertaking, and they painfully conſume their Lives in hunting through a dark Labyrinth, after that which they ſhall never find.

They hunt and ſearch indeed; all their Wits are employ'd in ſtudying night and day

day to penetrate to the very Center of Beings, to dive into the bottom of Subſtances, and to devine what thoſe myſterious Secrets are, which the Creator has ſo carefully buried in an everlaſting Night; then to ſpeak their Thoughts of them, and after to maintain with Arguments all they have ſaid; and placing the World, as it were, in the middle of them, to ſtrive in their Academical Combats to carry away the Honour one from another, of having beſt gueſs'd and known, in ſpight of God's Will, the Reaſons of his Works, and the Myſteries of his Providence.

It was in contemplation of theſe men, that *Solomon* pronounced the remarkable words of my Text, *Mundum tradidit diſputationi eorum*; God, who has left it to the pleaſure of Kings, to beſet with their Armies of an Hundred thouſand Men ſome Town, or Spot of fortified Ground, lets alſo theſe Aſſemblies of Doctors fall to work about a little Atome, and ſuffers them for theſe Three or Four thouſand years, to be obſtinately ſet upon, comprehending the deviſibility which he has hid-

den in the Point of a Needle, or upon discovering what are the Springs from which the Sun receives his Motion, from whence the Sea derives its regular Agitation, or the Beasts their Quickness when they course and run; whether it be one vast Soul spread over the whole World, or whether it be a multitude of little indivisible Souls, which flye up and down blindly every where, and by their continual motions produce all Action, Noise, Light, Colours and Smells, and all manner of Figures that appear within the Universe, not having so much as the assistance of any Reason, Intelligence, Imagination, or Life, to further them in it. *All this*, cries out *Solomon*, like the Labours of the Ambitious, and the Cares and Disquiets of the Covetous, *is but Vanity of Vanities*: It is the Sickness and Distemper of their Minds, who wilfully bind themselves over to the sway of their Passions, and the dreams of their Pride, spending their days to no end, but to convince other men that they have dream't aright.

It was a fine Saying of St. *Augustin*, That *the* Pythagoras's *and the* Democritus's

shut

ſhut themſelves up alone in their Cloſets, and there each ſets himſelf on work to ſhape and frame his particular Opinion and Folly; after which is done, they meet at publick Aſſemblies, and by their Diſputes do as much as call one another Fools, in a learned way.

Diſpute with theſe, if you will, upon their Poſitions, or rather exerciſe your Wit with them to divert your ſelf, and eaſe your Mind of any weight.

It is not to be denied, but that a Wiſe Man, without diminiſhing any thing of his Wiſdom, may encounter a Friend in this way, ſo that he pretend to no more than to divert himſelf, by putting his Friend to his ſhifts to defend his Opinion, or by forcing him to quit an ill Game; yet ſhould you prove good at this Sport, you muſt not therefore take your ſelf to be a great Philoſopher; we ſhall never be that truly and perfectly, till ſuch time as the Philoſophy of the Angels above in Heaven be our Study here below, and the Philoſophy of Men only our Entertainment and Paſtime.

MAXIM IX.

Curam habe De bono Nomine : hoc enim permunebit magis tibi, quam Mille theſauri pretioſi, & magni. Eccleſ. xli.

PARAPHRASE.

Amongſt all thoſe things which you poſſeſs, have a particular care of that which may laſt beyond Life, and be enjoyed by you after Death.

This Death will tranſport your Riches into other Hands; Time will deſtroy your Buildings and conſume your Works; nothing but the Merit of your good Actions will follow you to Heaven, and nothing will remain to you upon Earth but the Reputation you ſhall have acquired by the Wiſdom of your Carriage, and the good Examples you have left behind yon: Labor ſtill with all your force to make your ſelf as rich this way as you can poſſibly, that when you come to dye, you may end with the Conſolation of having left that Ho-

Honour in your Family, which you found in it when you came firſt into the World.

REFLECTIONS.

Curam habe de bono nomine, when you are well ſpoken of in Company, or amongſt the generality of the People, and that you have got a Reputation in your Country, do not make much account of it, if it be owing to Fortune, and leſs ſtill if you are beholden to the Contrivance and Partiality of your Friends for it, who go about, by their intereſted Praiſes and officious Lyes, to make you paſs for an Extraordinary Perſon: but if this befals you through the Bleſſing of God, who diſpoſes Men to obſerve the Merit of your Actions, and ſet a Value on you in their Hearts, cheriſh it with a particular Care, and be ſenſible, that it ought to be rank'd amongſt the moſt precious things that belong to you.

Preſerve it tenderly, for it is a Duty in you to do ſo, but make it not on any terms the Aim and End of your Deſigns and Hopes.

You muſt conſider, that this Reputation is as it were your Shadow, and that it is impoſſible for you to turn your Eyes and Thoughts that way, and fix them there for one moment, without turning your ſelf away from the true Sun, and loſing his Sight. Nothing ſure renders a Man more glorious, whilſt he walks in the Paths of Innocence and Juſtice, than to be waited on by the Peoples Praiſes, and the Voice of Fame: but it would be a ſhameful thing for you, ſhould you run after theſe Shadows, and make them the Motives of your doing your Duty, and the Cauſes of ſetting your Heart on any Employment.

To ſpeak clearly in one word, To have a care of your Reputation, is not to be bent upon ſeeking the Eſteem and Praiſes of Men, but it is, to be bent on doing no other thing but what is pleaſing to God, and truly deſerves the Approbation and Eſteem of All. An indifferent thing it ſhould be to you, whether Men or Angels value your Actions, but you ought to take all the care in the World to order them ſo, that they may be worthy to be valued both in Heaven and Earth. And

And certainly you may obſerve, that amongſt all the great Princes and Prelates in the World, the moſt illuſtrious ſtill have been thoſe, that in their Undertakings never ſought the Favour of Peoples Tongues, or the Applauſe of Nations, but thoſe who have acted ſo well and glorioufly in all they have done, as that this World, which they had no deſign to pleaſe, could not but covet to know all they did, and give it their admiration: The difference between them and the others is, that the Ambitious, by their heroick actions, ſeek the pleaſure and ſatisfaction of being applauded and praiſed by Men; whereas theſe have the ſame Enjoyment, but look not out for it, their Aim is at ſomething incomparably more attractive, and honourable, and more worthy to be reſted in.

Do like them, you who are a conſiderable Perſon, and bear ſome high Office in your Countrey, *Curam habe de bono Nomine.* You would be unworthy to carry the Name of a Gentleman, ſhould you fail in having a great Care of your Honour; this Care conſiſts not in getting Men to praiſe you,

you, nor in quarreling with thoſe that will not honour you, or that do ſhew a contempt of you ; it conſiſts in being offended at your ſelf, for having done contemptible things. The Subject of your Choller and your Trouble ſhould not be to have the Diſorders of your Life taken notice of and known, but that you have ſuffered them to fix upon you for ſo long a time, and that you ſtill ſhew no diſlike to them : call not thoſe faulty, who obſerve and talk of them, their Liberty in this does not depend on your Complaints or Threats : Heaven, your Conſcience, and the People are three Witneſſes againſt you, which you will never have the power to blind or ſilence : it is you that are the faulty Perſon ; it is your own Heart, which by its ſcandalous Crimes blackens you, both in the Face and in your Reputation : when you appear in this condition before the Eyes of theſe three dreadful Spectators, and that you bluſh to be thus ſeen, accuſe not thoſe that ſee you, blame your own blind Ambition, if it has put you upon getting a prime Dignity in the Church, only to make you appear (ſpot-

ted

ted as you are) with the more Shame and Infamy. Since you ſtand upon the point of Greatneſs and Honour, be effectually honourable, and imitate thoſe that are ſo.

Imitate them, you that bear Offices, and ſit upon your Tribunals, and conſider, that to appear in thoſe ſtations without Honour, nothing can be more infamous, nor nothing more ridiculous in ſuch an one, than to go ſeek for Honour there: Never hunt after Reputation in theſe occaſions, but do ſo well, as that you may find it in them: make theſe two Duties to agree.

To effect this, looks like a Task for an Angel, and yet however it is the moſt important of your Affairs, and not the moſt difficult: all the Difficulties, as I have ſaid, lies in this point, That whilſt you exerciſe your Charge, you ſo well govern your Mind and Intentions, as to do nothing purpoſely to make you honoured and eſteem'd of Men, nor nothing but what will oblige them to honour you ſincerely.

Whenſoever you ſhall refuſe to commit an Injuſtice; when you ſhall chuſe rather

to

to periſh than to betray the Innocent, and give up their Right either to Favour or Power; do not ſay to your ſelf as *Cato* did, *What will* Rome *think of my Baſeneſs, if I do thus?* ſay with *Judas Macchabeus*, *Should I ſtoop to Fear, what will God ſay, who forbids me to ſcandalize my Countrey, and ſtain the Glory of our miraculous Victories by ſuch an Infamy: Abſit ut fugiamus abiis Moriamur in Virtute Noſtra.*

Cato dying to get an everlaſting Name in *Rome*, became the Martyr of the Commonwealth; become you in the like occaſion the Martyr of the Living God, maintain your Honour with an invincible Force and Courage even to Death, but do it not for the ſake of your Honour; do it becauſe this is inſeparably joined to the Glory of God, the Good of the Publick, the Edification of Man, and the Intereſt of Religion.

In a word the Point lies here, To do all that deſerves to be liked by Man, but yet in pleaſing Man, to do nothing but to the end of pleaſing G O D.

Whoſoever you be then, that live in the face of the World, looked upon by Heaven

and

and Earth, you that are addreſſed to by Crowds of Suitors, who come begging to your Feet with Tears to do them Juſtice, be ſure you keep your ſelf free from endeavouring by counterfeit Looks and vain or Falſe-appearances to win their Approbation and Eſteem, ſo to be noted for a Man of Honour and Integrity. Think never further, than how to act in your Employment according to the Laws of Conſcience, and to acquit your ſelf before God in all your Chriſtian and Civil Duties; but do this with that winning Grace, as that the Benefit you may hope for in undertaking an Affair, comes ſhort ſtill of the Reputation, and that the Perſons you deal with be fully ſatisfied with all your ways, by the handſom Marks you give of your Integrity.

Make a Profit to your ſelf, and with it a Gain of Love: God approves it. But whilſt things proſper with you, fix your Mind ſtill on Heaven. In every Action, at every good Succeſs attending ſuch a prudent and virtuous Carriage, aſpire to God alone, and grave within your Heart this Motto, which *Otho* the Great had always

ways before his Eyes; *The Shadow of my Happineſs is, to be pleaſing to Man; but my True Happineſs is, to be pleaſing to GOD.*

It is this ſort of Reputation, which truly makes a Man's Fortune, and that roots Honour in all thoſe Families where we ſee it fixed.

Be you but a ſimple Tradeſman, or a poor Country Labourer, with that little Stock of Goods you have, let your Credit at leaſt equalize it, without minding what Men ſay of you, either good or bad, live after ſuch a way as may oblige your Neighbours to ſpeak well of you, and be edified by your Examples; you will find that your proudeſt Gentlemen and Maſters will themſelves be edified by you, and that ſoon or late they will be forced to confeſs you are a Man of Honour, and much above them, if they want your Conſcience, and the Command you have over your Paſſions. Gentility is often bought, but an Honourable Heart never, nor the Title of *An Honeſt Man*; this ſprings only from a Modeſty of Countenance, a Sincerity of Words, and a Wiſe Judicious Carriage, accompanied with an Inviolable Truth:

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Curam habe de bono Nomine, hoc enim tibi permanebit, quam mille theſauri pretioſi & Magni.

MAXIM X.

Coacervavi mihi argentum & aurum ſubſtantias Regum ac Provinciarum: omnia quæ deſideraverunt oculi mei, non Negavi iis: & Vidi in Omnibus vanitatem & Afflictionem animi. Eccl. ii.

PARAPHRASE.

From my younger years I have known what Nature teaches Man, That he comes not into the World, but to ſeek in it Felicity: I have ſought for it, and done all in my power to find out where it lies.

I have enquired after it amongſt thoſe Princes who have been counted the moſt happy; I have known their Minds, and conſider'd all their Ways; I have ſeen their Examples, and they mine; we have followed one another's Steps; and in concluſion, I have obſerved, that they and I have run through the World, flying from Pain

Pain and Trouble, to ſeek a Good, which only Heaven can yield. After having baniſh'd out of my Houſe and Territories Poverty, Sickneſs, and War, I have cauſed to be brought to me all that the *Indies* and *Arabia* would afford, and all that the Kings of *Europe* and *Aſia* had, that was moſt precious: I have gathered together all the Riches and Delights of every Nation, hoping amongſt them I ſhould meet with Felicity, but it would never appear; and all I have done has ſerved only to ſend it further off, and give me Affliction. *Vidi in omnibus vanitatem & afflictionem animi.*

REFLECTIONS.

It is but an ill Project, in ſeeking the Means to become happy, to endeavour to bring matters to ſuch a paſs, as that you ſhould not ſuffer any Inconveniency, but be wholly left to the enjoyment of the Good Things you poſſeſs.

Solomon undertook this, and brought it eaſily to paſs, but he ſoon repented him; *Omnia quæ deſideraverunt oculi mei non Ne-*

Negavi eis : I have not denied my ſelf, ſays he, *what Contentments my Heart deſired, without the Exception of any one.* Is it not a ſtrange thing ? from the very moment that he wanted nothing, he began to be unhappy ; thoſe Delicacies he had ſo much deſired became themſelves his Bitterneſs and diſlike.

Imagine not, O Chriſtian, that when you are arriv'd at what you have aſpired to, for theſe many years, and that you have nothing left to wiſh, you will be without cauſe of Complaint, even then you will complain, and find it a great Evil to have no more to aim at or deſire. Amongſt the Wretched, none deſerve Compaſſion ſo much as thoſe whom Fortune has put into ſuch a Condition, as they have nothing more to do, than to enjoy her paſt Favours, but are condemned to reſt in one and the ſame flouriſhing way, without any oppoſition.

It ſeems really, in all appearance, that the Quiet of our Mind, during this mortal Life, does not conſiſt in the poſſeſſing of the good things expected and hoped for by us, but in the acquiring of them, and

ſeeing them come into our Hands. They are no ſooner ours, but that we begin to diſreliſh them, in caſe they do not beget a new Deſire. After having toiled for a long time, and thirſted, to arrive at ſome degree of Honour, our whole Joy is in getting to it, and not in reſting there. In two days after the Succeſs of a Deſign, our Paſſions thruſt us upon new Attempts, and we muſt obey them, otherwiſe that which is moſt inſupportable to Man's Nature, falls upon us, to find our ſelves ty'd up Night and Day to dull Reſt, and wearied to death by the quiet and continual enjoyment of one and the ſame Happineſs. This proves, that it is better to labour in giving a Repulſe to ſome Evil which aſſaults us, than to poſſeſs a Good we have acquired in Idleneſs.

So true it is what *Seneca* has ſaid, 'That 'there is a certain ſomething within us, 'which is an Enemy to our Repoſe, and 'will have us continually give our ſelves 'new Troubles.

The Queſtion is, from whence this proceeds: To accuſe Deſtiny of it, or the capricioufneſs of our light and fickle Imagination,

gination, is an Error ; the true Reaſon of it, according to the Holy Fathers, is, That theſe ſeeming Lightneſſes, and theſe myſterious Diſguſts of every Felicity belonging to this Life, ſpring from a ſecret inſtinct ſtamped on our Souls, together with the Image of the Creator. *Tam bonam fecit Deus hominis Naturam, ut male ſit ei, non eſſe cum Deo.* Our Soul, ſays St. *Auguſtin*, is ſo excellent and divine, and framed in ſuch a manner to poſſeſs God, that as ſoon as he is abſent, and ſeparated from it by Sin, this Soul cannot but ſuffer by a diſmal Solitude, and at the ſame time be quite exhauſted, languiſhing with an inſatiate Thirſt : But, what would ſhe have ? ſhe knows not her ſelf ; all that ſhe knows is, that ſhe is cruelly diſguſted and nauſeated with all the Preſents the World makes her, and that this Diſguſt comes from the violent and extream deſire ſhe has to ſome one Good that is not offered her.

To content and ſatisfie her, you go and hunt after change of Remedies, and find out new Employments for her, and all manner of Divertiſements proper to eaſe the reſtleſs Diſquiets of this melancholy

and wearied Soul: She taſts, and ſeems at firſt to find ſome Reliſh and Solace in theſe Novelties; but the Fits of her Diſtemper ſoon return; ſhe begins on the ſudden to complain anew, and you are put to begin again to look out freſh ways to eaſe her: you look them out, you take pains, you heap up a World of Riches, and load your Houſe with them, then ſhew this great Abundance to your Soul, and you ſay to her what our Lord ſaid, *Behold and be at reſt. Anima Mea, habes multa bona congregata in plurimos annos requieſce.* 'See, my Soul, we have got into our 'Hands all that can be deſired in the 'World; be content, and comfort your 'ſelf. This Soul, not to be comforted, inſtead of opening a Heart to let in Joy and Hope, anſwers you only with Complaints; after having taſted and tryed theſe new Remedies, theſe new Employments, and all your other precious Novelties, ſhe thruſts them back with Scorn, and cries out to you, *Cumeta Vanitas & afflictio ſpiritus:* Ye Goods of the Earth, ye Riches and Honours, what are ye, but Vanity of Vanities, Affliction and Deſpair?

Won-

Wonder not at this: an immortal Soul, that feels the Violence of its Deſires, and finds, that beſides the good things you ſhew her, ſhe cannot be without an infinity of others, infinitely more deſirable: When ſhe comes to know, that ſhe muſt reſt quiet, and content her ſelf with what ſhe ſees in your Hands, and that there is nothing for her to purſue or hope for in Heaven, what muſt her Sufferings be? Can ſhe take any other Reſolution, than to abandon her ſelf to Vexation and Sorrow, and to all the Miſeries of a deſpairing Conſcience?

No certainly, this does not ariſe from a capricious Melancholy bred within you, but from a hidden Inſight born with you, which takes its time, at your hours of leiſure, to put your Soul continually in mind, that when ſhe is ſeparated from God, all her ſpiritual and Divine Subſtance is no other thing than an extream Miſery, and from that inſtant an infinite one, tho' not to be felt infinitely but in Hell.

Behold the interiour Peace that great Riches afford, but Wiſdom tells us by the

Pen of *Solomon*, we are to reckon otherwiſe of a Mediocrity.

MAXIM XI.

Mendicitatem & Divitias ne dederis mihi.
Prov. xxx.

PARAPHRASE.

'Let me have neither Poverty or great 'Riches, ſays *Solomon*, this I apprehend, 'and that gives me Horror. The one leads Man to Atheiſm, and transforms him into a Devil; the other turns him into a Beaſt, and makes him the Mockery of Human kind: Theſe are two Pits digged upon the Earth, to be the two great Deſcents into Hell: Fools run blindly to the one, and caſt themſelves into it by their Profuſions; the Proud and Covetous haſte to the other, and damn themſelves by labouring Night and Day to get to it.

Our true Quiet and Repoſe is found where Wiſdom keeps, in the middle. Of all the Conditions of Human Life, the moſt

moſt ſecure, moſt honourable, and moſt eaſie, is, to live between Superfluity and Indigence, and the furtheſt off that it is poſſible from either Extream.

REFLECTIONS.

It has been the Opinion of the World, from the beginning, and ſtill continues ſo, That the Felicity of Man, during this Mortal Life, conſiſts in his poſſeſſing of a great Abundance. Many ſeem, though at the hour of Death, to be of another mind, and ſpeak of Riches like Perſons that were become perfectly undeceived; but whatſoever they ſay, we ſee very few return from thence by the help of Remedies, who do not bring back with them their old Miſtake.

The Rule, *That the Richer a Man is, the more he is Happy*, ſticks as faſt in onr Hearts as our Life does there. We muſt be dead, St. *Auguſtine* ſays, before we can learn to deſpiſe what we worſhip here below. The Contempt of Riches is a Change of Mind, which does not befal us, but at our going out of the World, and entrance into Eternity.

Do you anticipate that Day, and learn to know thoſe Truths at preſent, which ought to be no leſs known by Chriſtians in the Church of Jeſus Chriſt, than they are in Hell by the Damned and Devils.

It is his Judgment, inſpired by God, who was the Wiſeſt amongſt Men, That to become Happy in this World, we muſt ever keep our ſelves in a certain middle way, wherein being not Rich or Poor, we may neither be in want of any thing, or have any thing ſuperfluous: and wherein being freed from the Diſquiets inſeparably accompanying Want and Abundance, we may live peaceably here, by the Wiſdom of our Carriage, and bring it ſo to paſs, that after many years of a calm and devout life, we may go to enjoy an Eternity in another Life, infinitely more deſirable.

Order your Affairs to this end; Take the Pains to ſettle your ſelf in this happy way, of having neither more nor leſs than is ſufficient for one of your Condition: ſtrive to have enough to make you paſs your days with Honour, and in Peace, and to aid you in performing the indiſpenſible

Duties

Duties of Juſtice and Chriſtian Prudence towards your ſelf, and thoſe that belong to you: have enough to ſatisfie this, but at the ſame time keep your ſelf from having enough to ſatisfie Ambition and your other Paſſions.

The Paſſions are ſo many Furies within us, which are chained up and laid faſt aſleep by Virtue, but are ſoon awaked by the ſound and ratling of Silver and Gold: They begin to cry out exceſſively, and to ſtruggle with their Chains, at the firſt perceiving that we have in our Coffers the Means to humour them: the Money we tell over, and they ſee lodged in our Hands, ſets them into a rage, and they are not to be quieted till we put our ſelves out of the capacity of contenting them. Reduce your ſelf then low by your Alms, and let that glorious Incapacity be one of the Examples and Inheritances you leave to your Children. In a word, take this for one of your Maxims, *Nec Mendicitatem, nec Devitias*; *Neither too much, nor not enough.* Theſe are two Evils that equally lead to the laſt of Miſeries, and that coming upon us, do mark us with as fatal

fatal a Character as Man can bear in his Forehead.

Do not ſtay to know the Miſeries of a Priſon by your own Experience; inform your ſelf well about it, whilſt you have your Liberty. It is ſufficient, one would think, to have Eyes to look into the Lives of the Poor and Rich, to teach us to avoid the ever being like to either of them.

Conſider with your ſelf, that ſhould you come to be ſuddenly enriched, and be one of thoſe that wears the Title of a great Lord, all the advantage you would get above thoſe of a middle Fortune, would be, to have night and morning a great Hurry and Trouble round you, to have more Flatterers at your Table, more Vanity and Foolery in your Train, more Unneceſſaries in your Furniture, more Noiſe in your Houſe, and Diſquiet in your Mind, more Sins in your Conſcience, and more to repent of at your Death.

Have never ſo many Thouſands, you are not able to purchaſe a ſecond Body; and whilſt you have but one, what need have you of two Houſes, of three Tables, and much leſs of threeſcore Hands to ſerve you?

The

The greatneſs of this Trouble and Expence, wherein is it uſeful, but to others, to thoſe that you feed? So that you will find it very well ſaid of the Wiſe Man, That *they who labour moſt for Riches, labour leaſt for Themſelves.*

To comprehend this the better, be you Judge of a Tryal that happened heretofore between a wretched Beggar and a mighty Rich man; *Pauper & dives obviaverunt ſibi:* Theſe met one day, as it fell out, before a great Audience of People, and diſputed about the Advantage of their two Conditions, which had never been argued.

The Poor man maintained, that *his* deſerved to be firſt preferred, and took upon him to bring the Rich man to confeſs and own ſo much himſelf: He asked him, which was the moſt eaſie Condition, the leſs ſhameful, and the freeſt from giving Pain and Trouble, whether to have the Care of getting Bread every day for one Perſon, or of getting it for threeſcore or an hundred Mouths.

Whether to receive nothing, but by the way of Alms, or to poſſeſs nothing, but

but by the way of Rapine and Couzenage.

Whether to be bitten by Vermin, or eaten up by a Swarm of Servants, who have no other Buſineſs about you, but to devour you at your Table, and are ready, when there is nothing left, to caſt your Bones out to the Crows, and give up your Intereſt to the Rage and Covetouſneſs of thoſe Enemies that overpower you.

Qui me Comedunt non dormiunt. Job.

Servis obſideor, &c. Terent.

Whether to be treated with the Name of *Rogue*, and accuſed of Lazineſs by a Citizen's gripple Wife, or to be treated with the Name of *Oppreſſer* and *Robber*, by a whole miſerable Countrey, and be put to hear the Cries of the Blood and Tears of the People, which call to Heaven for Vengeance againſt you.

In concluſion, Which is moſt to be feared, to be damned for the Sins of Beaſts, or for the Sins of Devils? And of the two Atheiſts, which would be the leſs ſeverely puniſh'd in Hell, he that did not know God in the time of his Afflictions, or he that knew him not in the height of his Riches and Proſperity? I can-

I cannot ſay how this Diſpute was decided, but *Solomon* tells us, that both theſe Conditions are the moſt dangerous ones that belong to Human Life: And of two ways which lead to an Eternal Unhappineſs, the fairer is to be no more valued than the other. One of his Interpreters ſays, That there is ſcarce any to be found in Hell, but ſuch as have been either too poor or too rich.

That voluntary Poverty which is embraced out of Devotion, and ſupported by Grace, is to be valued above all Treaſures, and is certainly the moſt direct way to Heaven. In this Cœleſtial Path we ſee a number of our Religious Walk, and many other holy and exemplary Perſons, who follow neareſt the Steps of Jeſus Chriſt.

Riches well and wiſely governed, and employ'd with Juſtice and Chriſtian Charity, is another way, that leads far into Sanctity, but a way very hard to hit.

Theſe that can keep in it without wandering, are ſuch of the Elect as are raiſed to do great Actions through ſo victorious and extraordinary a Grace from Jeſus Chriſt.

Out

Out of what you have, tho' it ſhould prove not to be overmuch, after having diſtributed as befits to your Children and Family, remember you have Friends that have ſerved you at your need; remember the Poor, who come to you from God, and thoſe Guardian Angels that ask a ſmall Proportion of you for the Church; make them out little Shares, if it be not in your power to do more; it matters not, you may become thus as great a Saint as any of thoſe Lords or Ladies, that beſtow their Charities never ſo magnificently; theſe little Parcels, ſmall as they are, will appear before God of equal Value to the moſt Conſiderable Alms; and theſe differing Liberalities will be rewarded alike in Heaven.

MAXIM XII.

Magnificavi opera mea Ædificavi mihi domos : Supergreſſus ſum Opibus Omnes qui ante me fuerunt. Eccl. ii.

PARAPHRASE.

I have built Palaces, I have hoarded up Riches, and great have been the Goods in my poſſeſſion, I have flouriſh'd in Honours and Dignities, have lived magnificently, and my Fortune has given Envy to the moſt Ambitious; but I have found at laſt that all this was only Affliction and Vanity, and that a ſolid Mind, enlightned with true Wiſdom, can never find its Peace of Heart this way.

REFLECTIONS.

If it be your Deſtiny to be born of Rich Parents, and a high Family, and if Providence has diſpoſed of you to live in Splendor and Greatneſs, live after that ſort, but do not damn your Self by it.

Many

Many are the Leſſons that Books afford to teach how to underſtand this Condition, and to govern your ſelf wiſely in it; what I adviſe is, only to keep ſtill in your Mind theſe words of *Solomon*, *Vanitas Vanitatum*; there are a great many ways of expounding them, the matter reſts in hitting the right ſence; if there be a Difficulty to find it out, there may be however ſome advantage made by the ſearching into it. Employ your Thoughts a while to this Intent, and withdraw from Company ſometimes, to hearken to what your Heart will ſay to you on this Subject; it may inſpire you perhaps with Conſiderations of more worth than all that you can find written: what I can ſay of it to you, is but a word or two, which I deſire you will mind.

Vanitas Vanitatum: I believe *Solomon*'s Meaning is, That you are the Miſtake and Vanity of the World, and the World your Miſtake and Vanity: you deceive the World, and it cheats you: you are proud of its Submiſſions, its Reſpects, and the Pains it takes to do you Honour; the World glories in your favourable

rable Looks, and in the hopes of the Protection you promiſe it.

Both you and it have learned the fatal Secret, how to hinder each from knowing the others Treachery, till it be too late to remedy, and that you are juſt come to periſhing: when you behold the World lying at your Feet, and that you obſerve its Adorations, with all the ceremonious Proteſtations it makes you to be conſtantly and ever yours: you imagine to meet with a Fidelity and Friendſhip out-laſting Time: but within three or four days, if Fortune grows to be weary of you and your Courtſhips, and that ſhe comes to ſend you the Decree of her Diſgrace, you will ſee theſe Adorers flye over to your Enemies to adore them, and court the new Favourites of this Fickle Fortune to your Deſtruction.

In the like manner the World, when it beholds you at the preſent, ſeated in your Palace, amidſt a throng of Perſons, who ſtrive to have the honour to ſpeak to you, and ſay ſomething that is pleaſing, and when it obſerves the glance only of a favourable Eye from you, makes the

Joy of all thoſe that are about you, it imagines to behold a Power able to ſupport a Man's Family, and make his Poſterity happy for ever, and nothing is thought too dear with which to merit and purchaſe your Favour, not even Goods or Life. How blind is this Man? in three months time he finds you laid in a Tomb, and full of Shame, queſtions himſelf, if it were on that heap of Rottenneſs and Duſt, that he had built his Hopes and Happineſs, and if this were the Idol he adored, at the coſt of ſo much Sacrifice.

In ſhort, ſince according to the Teſtimony of your own Conſcience, you are made up of no other things but a company of falſe Promiſes, of falſe Oaths, falſe Civilities, falſe Friendſhips, and falſe Devotions; and that the World, on the other ſide, according to your daily Complaints of it, is nothing elſe but a Cheat, that deceives you. Is it not true, that according to the Dictates of the Holy Ghoſt, the right Title of this World is the Cheat of Cheats, the Traytor of Traytors, the Seducer above all Hypocrites, the Lie, the Error, and the Vanity of Vanities, to thoſe

that

that are the wrong way wiſe: *Vanitas Vanitatum & afflictio Spiritus.*

Whoſoever you are that have Riches by you, and have, like the Palaces and Houſes of Great Perſons, your glorious Apartments adorned with precious Movables, which you have not a handſom Liberty to part with; conſider them with ſuch Thoughts as become a clear diſcerning and noble Soul: act after ſuch a way, as that God, who ſees your Furniture and Riches, may not ſee any thing in you, when you have your Eyes and Mind upon them, that faſtens you to the love of Creatures, but that which ties you faſter ſtill to him, and engages you to own, that he ought to be eternally and infinitely loved; *Tibi dixit Cor meum exquiſivit te facies mea:* 'You know, O Divine Lord 'of my Life, that theſe Curioſities and 'coſtly Adornments are here only out of 'an Obedience to your Will; the World 'gives them the Name of Neceſſaries and 'Decencies; the Saints call them Vanities 'and Hinderances; I call them at this 'preſent Shadows of your Greatneſs, and 'Preſents from your Bounty.

In fine, at the ſight of theſe Ornaments which appear in your Chamber, be careful to make theſe two following Reflections: the Firſt, That you behold the Gate which is to let you into your Tomb.

That it is in this very Bed that is ſo richly embroidered Death will come to take you, and carry you into another Bed, where the crawling of Worms upon your Body will make a very different ſort of Works about you.

The other, That out of your Tomb you will paſs into a Paradiſe, of which all that you poſſeſs here the moſt precious is but a poor and dark Reſemblance.

It is a very ſweet thing to aſpire to Heaven from the lowneſs of Poverty, becauſe we are ſure that is the neareſt way thither; but it is no leſs ſweet to aſpire to it from the height of Proſperity and Riches, if the Goodneſs of God makes you find, that amongſt ſo many Dangers in which moſt of the Reprobate have periſhed, he preſerves you in Holineſs by his unmeaſurable Grace; ſuch as is a certain Token of the Perſeverance of his Protection, and of the Eternity of his Love.

Think

Think, that you ſee what a holy Spouſe ſaw heretofore, that upon all the Preſents God makes you, and all the Goods which come into your Houſe, is written, *He that ſends you all this, expects you in Heaven: Surge, propera amica mea.* You are thought of in Paradiſe, make haſte, and come away to him that loves you: Quicken the time by your Longings and your Tears.

This multitude of good things muſt needs forward you beſides, in the acknowledging your Obligations to the Divine Providence; when you ſee a poor wretch lying in the Straw, full of Ulcers and Stench, dying with Cold and Hunger, what do you ſee but a Glaſs repreſenting to you that, which you would or might have been your ſelf, had not God had a particular Favour for you.

MAXIM XIII.

Vidi Servos in equis, & Principes ambulantes Super terram, quaſi ſervos.

Eccleſ. x.

PARAPHRASE.

I have ſeen in the Streets of *Jeruſalem* Servants richly clad, and mounted upon Horſes of a high value, after whom Princes have followed on foot, like their Slaves, whilſt the People, who lately worſhipped them, looked upon them now only with Scorn.

REFLECTIONS.

When you ſee Perſons of mean birth, without Wit or Merit, raiſed to a degree, to which it was your Right to pretend, be not angry with Heaven, nor do you accuſe Providence: bear in your Mind, that nothing can befit the greatneſs of your Heart ſo much, as to have the Power and the Ho-

Honour to ſuppreſs thoſe Motions in you, which Anger and Envy uſually beget on ſuch occaſions.

I own, that theſe are ſmarting Strokes, and ſo much the worſe, in that they commonly happen contrary to expectation: but what appears the moſt bitter in them, is your being forced to pay an Obedience to theſe People, who by Right ought to lye at your Feet, and to whom the very Beaſts, had they Reaſon, would be aſham'd to ſubject themſelves.

All this I know very well, and yet I maintain you are in the wrong, if you make this your Complaint. Theſe Diſorders have laſted for this Six thouſand years; Why do you wonder at them? Theſe are the falſe Steps of blind Chance, let us endure them quietly, and without murmuring: Greater Perſons than we are, have endured them in other Ages, and do ſtill at the preſent; and if the Fellowſhip of the Miſerable be a Conſolation to thoſe that are ſo, there is not a Misfortune in the World, that can afford more Comforters than this.

How often in a day do we ſee in the Streets of *Paris*, what *Solomon* ſaw in thoſe of *Jeruſalem*, *Servos in equis, & principes ſuper terrum*? How often do we ſee on the Backs of ſtately Horſes, or ſeated in ſplendid Coaches, certain Creatures, whoſe Due it would be rather to carry or draw thoſe Perſons of Honour, they meet in their way walking on foot? How many are there amongſt the Supplicants, who come before the Courts of Juſtice to beg Redreſs, that would deſerve to ſit in the place of thoſe Robes they worſhip? In the Temples of our Religion, how many learned and holy Prieſts do give the Incenſe to ſome ignorant and faulty Churchman, ſeated under a State? How many great men in every ſtation are left to ſhift in the dark, without Employment, Credit, or Reputation?

You may perhaps be one of theſe, whom croſs Fate will not ſuffer to be minded, or ſo much as to be taken notice of to live: What does it concern you, though if you be known in Heaven, where more honourable matters are deſigned you, than all that your Deſires have ever aimed at without Succeſs?

In

In ſuch Occaſions as theſe, never go to make Complaints amongſt your Friends, but go and apply your ſelf to God, and communicate every thing to this Adorable Comforter; He will teach you to underſtand, that you are not leſſened by the exaltation of thoſe Men, but would be moſt ſhamefully debaſed by your ſelf, in ſuffering the Diſquiets and Vexations of Envy to enter into your Heart; for theſe interiour Pains would be your Confeſſion, that their Proſperity outweighed your Virtue, and that they were happier in the Eſteem of Fools that ſought to them, than you are in your Approach to God, who comforts you, and knows your Merit. Have a care, at the time of this ſweet and glorious Commerce, you ſhew not any Belief, that what is beſtowed on unworthy Perſons and Sinners can deſerve to be ambitioned by a Man of True Honour.

Learn to underſtand, that this is a matter fitter for your deriſion, than to become your Affliction and Trouble: Think what paſſes in *China*, when their Pagan Prieſts go to a Carver's Shop to chuſe an Idol.

If

If they meet with a Majeſtick Statue, and ſo curious a Figure as may deſerve to be put in the Rank of one of their gods, they contemn it, and leave it there; but if they find one that is ill cut, and is ridiculous, deformed, and monſtrous, they give any Money for ſuch a one, and ſet it up in their Temples for a Divinity. See if this be not the ſame that the World does, and then conſider whether the Contempt of ſuch blind Worſhippers be worth your trouble.

In ſhort, when you perceive the firſt aſſault of Sadneſs on ſuch occaſions, go and apply your ſelf to Wiſdom it ſelf, and ſtrive to do it in ſuch a manner, as that you may deſerve to be both informed and comforted by it.

It will tell you, that whilſt Sinners grow in Power and Wealth, you loſe not any jot of that degree, which your noble Mind and juſt Actions give you above them, in ſpight of all their Advantages; it will tell you, that the Stars, which ſeem to be under Mens Feet in the Day-time, are in that ſtation infinitely higher placed than Men, being they are nearer Heaven,

and

and that they are far ſuperiour to all that is great and beautiful in the World, ſince at the time of their lowneſs they remain ſtill fixed to their Firmament.

You will be told further, That it hurts not Gold to lye hidden in the Mine, whilſt Vanes of Braſs are on the tops of Palaces: That Gold remaining in the loweſt Caverns of the Earth fails not to be the King of Metals: That a Holy and Knowing Man, hid in a Cave, and left within a Deſart, ceaſes not to be Lord over theſe poor, proud, and contemptible Spirits, that are worſhiped in a Country, through Faction and Hypocriſie.

MAXIM XIV.

Unus quiſque in arte ſua, Sapiens eſt.
Eccleſ. xxxviii.

PARAPHRASE.

Every Man is wiſe when he undertakes that Calling which Providence and Nature have pleaſed to aſſign him.

REFLECTIONS.

Have you a mind to be a Happy and a Great Man? Be then, when you deliberate about the Condition you are to ſettle in, clear ſighted enough, if it be poſſible to find out that, which is moſt proper for you, and ſuits beſt with your Genius.

Be ſure you chuſe well: mind and look deep into your ſelf; penetrate into that which is moſt ſingular in your Perſon; examine your inward Motions, your Inclinations, the moſt ſecret Intimations of your Heart: ſtrive to know which way your Inſtinct would guide you, and to what

what Heaven and Nature calls you. In a word, underſtand well what you are, and let not your Talent of a Man born for great Actions, be buried under the quality of a Tradeſman or Merchant, a thing which happens too often amongſt People of all Nations. There is not a Country in which Men of great value have not been ſuffered to live and dye, without any notice being taken of their Worth, and without ſo much as their own knowing any thing of it, becauſe they have been put to thoſe Profeſſions, where their Merit and Genius could not be ſhewn.

The loſs of great Men happens in all parts; and that which appears the worſt in it, is, that no Perſon is concerned at it, becauſe they do not know that they have loſt, or ever had ſuch.

Obſerve, that God is not only the Inſtituter and Inventer, but alſo the Diſtributer of our Employments and Profeſſions; at leaſt, it is his Providence takes care to chuſe out, in every Country, Perſons that are capable to perform them: His Choice is effected, by conferring from their Birth, ſuch parts upon them, as are proper to make

make them ſucceed, and become excellent in their ways. Obſerve further, that there is not a Man amongſt us, who can do Service and Honour to the Commonwealth in any great meaſure, but ſuch a one as Chance, or the Judicious Choice of Parents has fixed in thoſe Employments, for which the Divine Wiſdom had marked him out.

It is not to be doubted, but that there is in every City, and in all other parts of the World, numberleſs Talents and eminent Gifts beſtowed by Nature on many young Men, which deſtine them to become one day great Captains, Prelates, Magiſtrates, Doctors, Architects, or Painters, every one fit to become admirable in his way, and to purchaſe Honour to his Country.

But as it falls out unluckily, either for want of opportunity or by the folly of young People, or the blindneſs of thoſe that ſhould be the Guides of Youth, every one pitches upon a Condition that does not belong to him. He takes a Sword into his Hand, who was born to be a Painter; the other, who was made to be an Architect, fol-

following his Father's Steps, turns Merchant; a third becomes a Prelate, who would have made a great General in the Field. It falls out alſo in Countries where Providence had moulded in its Hands, and fitted many Men with ſuch excellent Qualities, as would promiſe high things, that there appears nothing ſo rare to be ſeen as a Man of Parts, or a Maſter-piece of Knowledge amongſt them. The greateſt part of our Palaces and curious Cloſets are made rich only by the Works of Antiquity; the little that remains to be admired in theſe times, are but the Leavings of our Anceſtors, and they ſeem to be fallen into our Hands only to reproach us with the Sterility and Poverty of our Age.

There are Great Men at this preſent, but the Greatneſs of many of them does not appear: There are ſuch Preſents from Heaven, and ſuch precious Plants, but as Misfortune would have it, they have ſprung up in the Woods, and have been left to grow wild under Oakes, and amongſt the Shrubs, ſo that they can bear only harſh and bitter Fruit. Our Age is

not

not to be accuſed of Barrenneſs for this, nor the Ages of the *Auguſtus*'s and the *Alexander*'s to be preferred before it: what Shame there is in this Point, is to be attributed to the Negligence or Blindneſs of ſuch as ought to have diſcovered them.

But ſome will ask me, where there is an *Achilles*, a *Virgil*, a *Cicero*, a *Cato*, an *Ariſtotle*, a *Raphael*, a *Michael Angelo* in our days; my Anſwer is, That theſe Architects, theſe Orators, theſe Poets, Philoſophers, Heroes, and all theſe new Wonders of the World that you ask for, are at the preſent where were heretofore the great Princes and Popes, *Martianus*, *Juſtin*, *Agathocles*, *Benedict* XI, *Sixtus* V, before they were raiſed to the Throne; they are in our Shops, or elſe in our Villages, poor Shepherds, keeping of Sheep, but we know them not, nor do they know themſelves.

It looks as if only Chance could diſcover and find out theſe Rareties; yet Man's Induſtry, heightned with a Zeal for the Publick Good, would certainly go a great way in it: Would Stateſmen apply themſelves

ſelves to find out the means, that none of theſe Men of great Parts, provided by Nature for us, ſhould be loſt, there would, without queſtion, be made no little diſcovery of them: and, What could prove a greater Service to the Commonwealth?

The way was known heretofore to find out the moſt valiant and fam'd Souldier of the old times, when he was clothed like a Girl, and that he knew not himſelf to be other than ſuch, but thought to live ever as a Woman. The ways were found to diſcover, under the Habits of poor Shepherds, the famous *Paris*, the *Grand Cyrus*, and the moſt admirable King of *Judea*; had they lived ſtill in that way, what would they have been? We admire them now, after Two or Three thouſand years are paſſed, becauſe they were employ'd in their Calling, and that they reigned; if every one ſhould be put to do what is truly his Vocation, how happy would the World be, and how many Excellent Men, and what Maſterpieces of Art would there appear in it!

In concluſion, *Unuſquiſque in arte ſua, ſapiens eſt :* No Man will become ſufficient and able, but in the Profeſſion that belongs to him. When *Agathocles* in his young days followed his Father's Trade of making Earthen Pots, he was a meer Rogue, good for nothing, an inſupportable Brute, able to ruin his Father by his want of Skill in that Calling, and want of Inclination to it. *Agathocles* was born to reign; a ſtrange Change! no ſooner had Fortune raiſed him to the Throne, but that he proved one of the greateſt and the wiſeſt Kings that ever ruled in *Sicily*.

Another King, ill verſed in the Art of Reigning, whoſe Grandfather had been a Shoemaker, paſſing by the Shop of one of that Trade, where a young Man of Birth and Wit was forced to work for a Livelihood, and perceiving that he did not handle his Tools well, did laugh at him, and ſaid he would undo his Maſter with the ſpoil of Leather; *It is very true*, ſaid the young Gentleman Shoemaker, *if every one were at his right Trade, I ſhould not*

be

be the loſs of Leather, nor you the loſs of Cities, and the ruin of your Country.

I own, That Nature does commonly produce great and noble Souls, endowed with Excelling Qualities, in Perſons of High birth, but ſhe does not always tye her ſelf to this. On the other ſide there rarely appears in Perſons of Quality any great Talent for the making them eminent in the Arts: all that I can aſſure, is, That the Man who follows his true Calling never fails to be wiſe; and that one of the choice Sayings of *Solomon* is, *Unuſquiſque in arte ſua, Sapiens eſt.*

MAXIM XV.

Multi Amici ſint tibi, & Conſiliarius ſit tibi unus de Mille. Eccleſ. vi.

PARAPHRASE.

Few Children, fewer Servants, and an abundance of Friends, make the Golden Number, containing what renders a Family chiefly happy.

There are Diſeaſes in the Body, which ſhorten its Mortal Life ; there are ſuch in the Soul, as make its Immortality unhappy : the Cure for both is, a true and conſtant Friend, but to get him you muſt fear God.

REFLECTIONS.

The enjoyment of a number of Friends is one of our Felicities, and ought to be placed in the firſt Rank of them ; the Wiſe fix their Hearts on this Bleſſing, and cheriſh it equally with their Lives. Without Friendſhip even our Immortal Life would be but a Shadow of Living, or but a beginning of a Death, that would never come to an end : *Amicus fidelis medicamentum vitæ, & immortalitatis ; A faithful Friend is a Medicine of Life and Immortality,* ſays *Solomon.*

Have Friends, find them out, but do not purchaſe them ; a bought Friend is commonly one only in outward ſhew.

The way to get Friends, is, not to make them continual viſits, and ſeek to them with importunity ; do not you run after them ; ſtay for them. The ſame may be

be ſaid of Friendſhip, which I have ſaid before of Honour and Reputation; Theſe are Shadows, not to be ſtopped by a Man's purſuit and endeavours to ſeize on them.

The Skill lies in attracting them; carry your ſelf in ſuch ſort at your times of Converſation, that your Soul may diſcover many Excellencies in it, fit to pleaſe Almighty God, but not the leaſt Vanity, or Care to be pleaſing to Man.

The ſole Counſel that Wiſdom gives you in this occaſion, is to live in your own Houſe, and every where elſe, like a Man of Honour and Conſcience, and to edifie Company by your way of converſing with them; a Way that may ſhow you all commendable, and fill the Hearts of thoſe that know you, with Deſire to merit your Friendſhip. Look up to Heaven, ſeek after God, and aim in your Deſires to pleaſe him: True Friends will ſoon come and ſeek after you; and they will teach you to know, that Virtue, which links together the Hearts of worthy Men, is a Chain Deſtiny cannot break, nor Time, nor Death, no, nor Eternity.

Do as I tell you; love, and make your ſelf fit to be beloved: have the feweſt Flatterers, and the moſt Friends that you can poſſibly; I ſay, the moſt: your Glory and Advantage in this Point lies not in engaging by your Civilities and Preſents two or three Perſons to love you: there is not a Thief, or any Wicked Man, that has not two or three Friends of this nature. It is by the great numbers of thoſe that love and eſteem us, that we are to be diſtinguiſh'd from the Baſer ſort.

Trne it is, to have a great many Confidents is dangerous: *Conſiliarius ſit tibi unus, de mille*; *Have but one*, ſays *Solomon, to have two goes far.* But as for true Friends, their number cannot be too great, nor ſcarce ſufficient. There is not a Man of Worth, that does not merit and deſire to have more than he has. Aim to arrive at that degree to which *Joſeph*'s Virtue carried him; this lovely Perſon was in the center of the Court, amongſt Princes, Stateſmen, Philoſophers, and the Prime Men of the World, the ſame he was in Priſon, amongſt Thieves and Murderers; he was every where the Beloved

of

of all that ſaw him. Act ſo well by the Perfection of your Wit and Nature, and ſhew a Heart ſo obliging and magnanimous, as that of all thoſe that know you, although many be not truſted with your Secrets, yet none may want an Inclination to ſerve you, but count themſelves happy to meet with the occaſion.

You muſt not think ſuch Perſons unneceſſary to you, becauſe you abound in Wealth, or that they therefore may be ſpared: deceive not your ſelves, ye great ones of the World; the higher and more powerful you are, the more need have you of ſuch Seconds to ſupport your Power, and ſupport your Spirit, which muſt droop and ſink when it is left alone. It is true, according to *Plato*'s Opinion, that our Soul is immortal independently of other Souls, but not impaſſible nor invulnerable.

Man's Soul, though divine, and come from Heaven, finds it ſelf entangled in ſtrange occaſions, during the days of its mortal life; a Traveller loſt in the Night in a Deſart, without a Guide; a Priſoner in the Dungeon, without Comforter, Cre-

dit, or Counſel; a Sick-man in the Straw, without Phyſician; a Dying one on the Ground, without Prieſt or Sacrament; a dead Corps on the Dunghill, abandoned, unburied, and deprived of the Due of being covered with a little Earth, and of the Tribute of a few Tears. — — — — *Illamentatus atque inſepultus quaſi Cadaver putridum.* All this is the Image of our Spirit, when it is left to it ſelf alone; ſo that it may ſay with *Job, Strangers perſecute me, Servants fly from me, my Brothers know me not, and I can ſee no Friend that I have left, the Beſt looks on me with horror. Et quem maxime diligebam, averſatus eſt à me.*

In a word, it concerns you to make your ſelf be beloved; the Helps you may expect from thoſe that love you, are little leſs in number than the days you have to live: 'Of theſe days, ſays the Wiſe-man, 'ſome will be painful, and ſome will be 'days of reſt: Some will be days of Fears, of Dangers, Misfortunes, and Deſpairs, others will bring Hope, Proſperity, and Succeſs; but all theſe days, without diſtinction, will be days of Affliction, if you be

left

left alone; whereas if you enjoy your Friends, they will be days of Happineſs and Comfort.

What has happened to our Forefathers, and happens yet every day, will befal you. At times of Adverſity we feel not half our Pain, when others ſhare in the ſenſe of it, and are afflicted with us: at times of Proſperity our Joy is never perfect, until it be communicated, and that we ſee it conveyed into the Looks and Hearts of thoſe that love us. It is even more ſatisfying to noble Minds, to weep in a time of mourning, whilſt Friends mingle their Tears with ours, than to rejoice at a happy Succeſs, when we have no body to impart it to, that can be touched with the ſame ſenſe, and be unfeignedly pleaſed with what we tell them.

Value thoſe Perſons infinitely, who feel your Sorrows and your Joys, who intereſt themſelves, as much as you do in all your Affairs, and in all your Dangers; value them, for the World affords not any thing ſo rare: common it is enough to have Friends, each man has a quantity of them, but for what are they good? will they not

prove,

prove, in the day of Battel, a company of Deſerters and Fugitives, and be like a flock of Pigeons? At the leaſt noiſe of Affliction coming upon you, where is that faithful and inſeparable one, that will ſtick faſt by you? where is the Eagle that dreads no Thunder?

In ſuch Conjunctures a Man may be ſaid, to forſake even himſelf; you are a great and an able Man, you have much inſight into the Affairs and Dangers of the State, and into thoſe of your Neighbours, yet are you blind in Matters that touch your ſelf: no ſooner are you left alone in what nearly concerns you, and that you have no perſon to conſult with, except your ſelf, but your Underſtanding is quite at a loſs, all your Reaſonings prove Errors and Miſtakes, and like a ſick Phyſician, what you do for your Cure helps you only to periſh the ſooner. In a word, *Multi Amici ſint tibi, & conſiliarius ſit tibi, unus de mille: Have a thouſand Friends*, ſays the Wiſe-man, *and out of them one Confident.*

MAXIM

MAXIM XVI.

Facta ſum Coram eo, quaſi pacem reperiens.
Cant. viii.

PARAPHRASE.

I have met with Peace, when I was brought to contemplate my Spouſe, in the condition he was in on *Mount Calvary*, bathed in his Blood, and in the condition he now is, lodged in the Boſom of God his Father, whilſt he produces a Love as ancient as himſelf, and no leſs laſting.

By the one I know, that he loves me infinitely; by the other, that he will ever love me, and that I have reaſon to begin to enjoy an inviolable Peace in this low World, ſince I expect to enjoy one in Heaven above, that ſhall laſt as long as God's Eternity.

REFLECTIONS.

Although my Conſcience gives me no great Reproaches, ſay you, I have not yet that Peace you ſpeak of; my Fears are in the

the ſame meaſure they were before, when I lived in diſorder; all my Devotions, Auſterities, and Alms change not the Decree of God Almighty's Juſtice, nor the Purpoſes of his Providence: How can I tell, but that I am one in the number of the Reprobate? It would be requiſite, to make me enjoy a perfect Quiet, you could bring me the News, That my Name is written in the Book of Life, and an Eternal Place marked out for me, amongſt the Bleſſed. In a word, Shall I go to Heaven? God knows this already, I would fain know it too; I wiſh ſome one might tell it me certainly, by the appointment of Him, whoſe Mercy and Juſtice have written all theſe Truths in his Mind before the Creation of the World.

The Anſwer I can give you to this, is only the ſame that the great St. *Gregory* gave to a Lady very eminent in quality and devotion: this Lady, diſquieted with Care, that ordinarily befals Holy Souls, writ to that illuſtrious Prelate, who was her Director, and deſired to know of him, Whether her Sins were forgiven her, and whether ſhe might be at quiet touching her Salvation. What

What St. *Gregory* anſwer'd her with great Reſpect and Sincerity, was this; *Quod vero Duicedo-tua ſuis in Epiſtolis ſubjunxit, ſe mihi importunam fore, &c. You threaten me, Madam,* ſaid he, *that you will never leave writing to me, till ſuch time as God ſhall have revealed to me, that your Sins are pardoned, and that the Divine Mercy has pronounced the Decree of your Predeſtination: the Trouble you ſhould give your ſelf in writing to this end, would prove altogether ineffectual: to prevent it, and give you Comfort, I am ready to ſend you a preſent Anſwer. There are two Truths relating to your Queſtion, of which I can give you my aſſurance, they are theſe; the firſt, That I am too great a Sinner to be one of thoſe to whom God lays open the Books of his Eternal Science, or to whom he ſends his Angels and Prophets with Orders to declare the Secrets of his Providence. The ſecond, That the Account which you would have of the Certainty of your Salvation, muſt conduce more to your Harm than to your Comfort.* Perpende, quæſo dulciſſima filia: *Conſider, I pray, my dear Daughter, that Security is the Mother of Negligence, and that*

that you run the danger of having your Fervour abate, and to grow cold in the Exerciſes of a Devout Life, when you become too ſure of your Recompence: Mater è negligentiæ ſolet eſſe ſecuritas.

St. *Gregory*, you will tell me, ſaid very well; but that deſirable Favour I would pretend to, ſay you, if I durſt, were to have God, at the ſame time he lets me know I am marked out for Paradiſe, beſtow the Gift upon me out of his Goodneſs, that I ſhould never abuſe this Knowledge.

This would be an extraordinary Favor, ſay you, but not without Example. It was granted to *Abraham*, as I have read, to whom God formally declared, That he was in the firſt Rank of the Elect: *Abraham*, ſaid he to him, *I know thee, becauſe thou doſt belong to me, and that thou ſhalt everlaſtingly belong to me.* Something to this effect he ſaid alſo to *Iſaac*, to *Jacob*, to *Moſes* upon the Mountain, and to the Prophet *Jeremiah* in his Mothers Womb; that happy Infant knew he was elected before he was born; all the Apoſtles beſides knew certainly, that they were of this num-

number: *Rejoice ye*, ſaid our Saviour to them, *for your names are written in Heaven.* Our Bleſſed Lady, St. *Mary Magdalen*, St. *John* the Evangeliſt, St. *Paul*, and many others in times following, have learnt, from his own Mouth, or by the means of his Angels, that they were expected in Heaven, and that their Crowns were there ready prepared for them. St. *Thereſia*, after having ſeen the place was deſtin'd for her in Hell, had ſhe not been drawn out of the World by the moſt powerful Grace of the Holy Ghoſt, had the Comfort and Happineſs to ſee the place ſhe was to poſſeſs in Paradiſe. What a Joy, what a Bleſſing is this! and which way, ſay you further, can a Man be at a moments quiet in the time of this Mortal Life, unleſs we could know from God, by ſome miraculous means, that he, to whom we have conſecrated our ſelves, and who poſſeſſes us now, as the Purchaſe of his Blood, and the Inheritance of his Love, will not ſuffer any Power of the World, or Hell, to raviſh us out of his Hands, to our Eternal Miſery.

You are in a Miſtake, O Chriſtian, we may receive this Heavenly Comfort and Joy without the help of Revelation or any miraculous Apparition: it is not at all requiſite, that God ſhould ſpeak or appear to you, it will be ſufficient if you can love him as the Saints have done before you: This Love will produce an interiour Voice within you, or a ſupernatural Inſtinct: St. *Paul* calls it a Teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt imprinted on our Hearts; St. *Auguſtin*, a Ray of the Glory of Paradiſe, which breaks forth in elected Souls, during the height and tranſports of their Fervor. Give it what name you pleaſe, I ſay, it is a Divine Help, which diſperſes and drives away all the black Clouds, all the Fears and monſtrous Diſquiets of your Imagination, and like the dawning of a bright day, brings a Serenity, and begets in you a Certitude of your Salvation, independent of any Revelation or Prophecy.

True it is, that you will not ſay formally what the Hereticks do, and what cannot be ſaid without the higheſt Pride and Blaſphemy; *My Name, I am certain, is writ-*

ten

ten and ſet down amongſt the names of the Saints. But you may ſay that which true Love made St. *Paul*, and other bleſſed Perſons, ſay, who loved in perfection, *My Certainty is, that neither Death nor Life, Poverty nor Riches, nor the Torments and Cruelties of Tyrants, the Promiſes and Flatteries of the World, nor, in fine, all the force of Hell, ſhall ever ſeparate me from the Charity of Jeſus Chriſt: Certus ſum; I am certain of it, and am not more aſſured that I am alive at this preſent, than I am aſſured, by the help of Grace, to continue faithful to my God, as long as ever my Heart can breath. Donec ſupereſt halitus in me, & Spiritus Dei in Naribus meis.*

It is a moſt horrible and ſinful Preſumption, which makes the proudly-conceited of their Piety ſay, 'I know certainly, that 'God has been pleaſed to write me down 'in the number of his Elect, and that I 'cannot fail to go to Heaven. But it is a holy love that ſpeaks when you ſay, 'I will 'love my God even to Death; Death, 'Time, nor Eternity ſhall not part me 'from him: *Etiam ſi me occiderit, Sperabo in eum.*

What Pride utters, is a moſt horrid Boldneſs and Blaſphemy, ſince it undertakes to tell that which lies the moſt hidden in the Breaſt of God. To be able to ſay, without the help of Revelation, whoſe Names He has written ſecretly and eternally in his Heart by a gratuite Election, is to be no leſs than God. The Saying of Love is a holy Truth, and an humble Adoration of the Mercy and Grace of Jeſus Chriſt, inaſmuch as this ſpeaks only of the Vow you have made to love God, and of the perpetual and irrevocable Reſolutions and Decrees of Holineſs, which your ſelf has written within your Conſcience.

Look altogether upon theſe Vows which your Love has created, and do not amuſe your ſelf in reaſoning upon Circumſtances, as thoſe do who firſt begin to love, and who, by making compariſons and ſcrupulous Reflections, entertain ſuch Diſquiets as drive them into a dark Labyrinth, out of which they can find no iſſue.

When you are arrived at the degree of a fervent Love, you will be far from examining what the Succeſs of that Love may be, and from hearkening to the Fears

and Anxieties of your blind and timerous Fancy.

Being in this ſtate, you will know the News of your Happineſs, without your ſaying, I know it: you will not anſwer for any thing, but your Conſtancy and Perſeverance in making good the Promiſes, of which Grace and Humility have been the inſpiring Authors, and not Preſumption. You will rejoice holily within, without queſtioning or informing your ſelf which way you come to know you ſhall be conſtant: and although in reality no Voice ſhall tell you this, yet you will be as ſecure, and as much at eaſe in the midſt of all the dangers that ſhall ſurround you, as if Prophets and Angels had told it you.

You will not hear any Voice that will declare this to you, but you will become ſenſible, that the Inſtinct or ſecret Teſtimony, of which St. *Paul* ſpeaks, is a kind of thing more certain than Viſions, clearer than Revelations and Prophecies, ſweeter than the Conſolations and Aſſurances you can receive from your ſpiritual Directors,

ctors, and, in fine, more ſtrong and powerful than all your Fears.

Amongſt all the Examples you ſee of ſuch as fall from their Virtue, and in the heighth of the Reports of ſo many reprobated Perſons, as are ſounded in your Ears from all parts, able to make the Boldeſt tremble, you ſhall enjoy the Peace of the Elect.

Your Solicitude will not be to queſtion or make Doubts, whether you ſhall go to Heaven, or not, but will grow from the tediouſneſs and length of years, and the delays that put off the happy day in which you are to ſee your Beloved. You will not beg of the Angels, to let you know, whether you ſhall bear them company one day in the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and whether there be a place appointed for you there; but to let you know when you ſhall come thither, on what day, at which hour. O bleſſed Spirits! when will this be? Ye poſſeſs already him whom I ſeek, and whom you love; O Angels, I love as well as you, and cannot live without my God, yet all this while I ſee him not: *Adjuro*

juro vos filiæ Jeruſalem; I conjure you, O Daughters of *Jernſalem*, to take pity on my Love, and tell me when I ſhall enter into the Glorious Palace of my Spouſe, into the very place of that admirable Tabernacle, into the very Arms and Boſom of him who is the Object of my Sighs and Tears.

You will look upon Heaven as an Inheritance that belongs to you, and will ſay with *David*, *Lætatus ſum in his quæ dicta ſunt mihi.* 'I have heard a Divine Voice 'whiſper to my Heart, which has left theſe 'few words imprinted in it, That we ſhall 'go into the Houſe of God, and that after 'a moment or two of Labour and Affli-'ction we ſhall get out of this Valley of 'Tears, and Region of Death, to be tran-'ſported to the Habitation of Life and 'Immortality, where our Bliſs and Enjoy-'ment will be no leſs eternal than He is 'whom we love.

Here you ſee what has been ſaid and thought by ſuch perſons as have been in your condition, and by what means they have raiſed themſelves above the power of Hell, and above all the Fears and Diſquiets

that torment the Weak and Puſilanimous. In a word, if you be aſſured that you have a Good Will, ſhut not that Peace out of your Heart, which has been promiſed you from Heaven by theſe words ; *Pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*

MAXIM XVII.

Mulierem fortem quis inveniet ? procul & de ultimis finibus terræ pretium ejus.
Prov. xxxi.

PARAPHRASE.

It is not meant here, that there is not a ſtrong Woman in the World, but that there is not the Man who is wiſe and happy enough to find her out ; ſo hard it is to diſtinguiſh her from other Women, that diſguiſe themſelves, and deceive the Eyes of ſuch as are the cleareſt ſighted.

If there be thoſe notwithſtanding that will attempt the ſearch of her, ſee here her Figure, which I preſent them with, as a help to know her. They will judge by it,

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in my opinion, that if they were to go as far as the *Indies* to learn News of this Lady, ſhe would deſerve the Pains, and to have the Voyage undertaken for her alone, rather than for that number of things fetched from thence, infinitely leſs rare and precious.

REFLECTIONS.

It is not to be doubted, but that amongſt the Felicities of this Life, one of the moſt deſirable to Man, is to have Plenty, Order, and Peace ſettled in his Family.

The Duty of effecting this Settlement belongs particularly to the Wife, the Honour and the Obligation of the Husband diſpoſe of him wholly to the ſervice of the Common-wealth, to whoſe Benefit he dedicates his Time and Pains, and by his excellent Qualities comes to merit one of the principal Places in the government of it.

Theſe two Employments have been aſſigned by Providence to the Maſter and Miſtreſs of that Family of which *Solomon* ſpeaks in the laſt of his Proverbs: both the one and the other carry themſelves

after ſuch a manner, as make the Angels admire at the Grace which enlightens and enables them; and Men are at a loſs to reckon which of the Pair deſerves the beſt Preference.

Nobilis in pertis vir ejus quando Sederit eam Senatoribus terræ.

It is certainly an admirable Sight to behold this auguſt Peer awing the People into their Duty, or to ſee him preſide in an Aſſembly of Senators at a time, when the Frame of the State is ſhaken, and in diſorder; and yet ſuch as conſider the Carriage of the Wife at home in her Palace, ſee thoſe things which make a no leſs glorious appearance in their Eyes: they are not to be diſtinguiſh'd one from another. The Character which they receive from the general Voice, ſays, That their Examples regulate all the Actions of their fellow-Citizens, and that they equally ſhare, by their Merit, in all the Praiſes and Admiration of their Country.

See here the firſt Lines of their Figures, which the Wiſe-man has drawn to preſent to future times, and to confute the Complaints and Tears of ſuch as lay to Heaven

Heaven the ill Succeſs of their Marriage.

This Woman, who is all Obedience to her Husband, reigns in her Houſe at the ſame time he governs in the Senate; ſhe exerciſes there a Sovereign Rule, but does it without noiſe or violence. Her power in this place is mighty, becauſe it comes from Heaven: ſhe does not ſeek, as other Ladies uſe, to raiſe up her Authority by the magnificency of her Attire, and yet ſhe wears the richeſt Purple, and follows all the Rules of Decency and Cuſtom in dreſſing her ſelf, though ſhe has no need of any Help to make her be reſpected and honoured by her Domeſticks; God has beſtowed ſuch a Garment on her, as we ſhould *all* have worn, had our firſt Father but proved wiſe. *Fortitudo & decus indumentum ejus.* *Solomon* means, that there iſſues an Ayr of Greatneſs and Majeſty from the Eyes of this Princeſs, which ſpreads it ſelf over her like a Garment, and gives a certain luſtre to her Face, her Words and Motions, ſuch as cannot be expreſſed further, than that it raviſhes all Hearts,

Byſſus & purpura Indumentum ejus.

Hearts, and that it makes them happy who ſerve her, when her Commands give them the honour of obeying her, and the occaſion to ſhew, by their promptneſs and tranſport of Joy, the depth of their Reſpects.

This is it which keeps the whole Houſe in order, and puts every perſon, at each hour of the day, in the Place and Employment where he ſhould be: the reſpectful Fears that fix them to their Duty, is not as in other Families, a Fear of being catch'd in their Faults and puniſhed; all the Fear of this place is, the Fear of being faulty.

She is not the Miſtreſs only of her Domeſticks, but the Mother too: amongſt the chief Rules of her Government, the firſt is, to look that they be not failing in any part of their Duties; the ſecond, to ſee that nothing be wanting to them which Reaſon and Juſtice can claim for their ſupport and comfort. Her conſtant Care is, to avoid giving them any juſt cauſe of complaint, yielding them ſtill new occaſions of loving her, and of believing they are loved: her Goodneſs reaches to make them

them ſee, that ſhe both approves of their Service, and conſiders their Perſons.

This frank and obliging Goodneſs extends it ſelf to *All* without exception; it is but an ill Principle in a Maſter and Miſtreſs, to chuſe out one in a Family where there is a number of Servants, and to repoſe their whole Truſt on his ſhew of Fidelity, diſcarding in a manner all the reſt, for then his idle and raſh Reports muſt needs make them commit a thouſand faults, and cauſe more noiſe in a Houſe in one day than there would be in a year, would they endeavour to make themſelves beloved of all. To win Hearts, there lies the true and perfect Secret of Oeconomy in a Family, of Policy in a State, and of Hierarchy in the Sanctuary: whatſoever Government you may have, to make it happy, you muſt be taking and amiable; go not about to ſeek a more ingenious and uncommon method, GOD himſelf uſes no other in his Eternal Empire: *Ubi regnat æternus Amor & æterna Pulchritudo.*

This Lady we ſpeak of neglects not to employ her ſelf in Works befitting her Sex,

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performing curious things with her Needle; and though ſhe has no farther Skill than what Nature put into her Fingers in her Childhood, yet ſhe proves knowing enough to ſet Patterns, and give Directions to the moſt skilful Work-women, making her ſelf admired of all the Ladies that ſpend the time of their Viſits in ſeeing her work, and in learning of her, but they come too late to her acquaintance to be capable of imitating her. *Quæſivit lanam & linum, & operata eſt conſilio manuum ſuarum.*

Theſe little Employments ſet not, ſays *Solomon, the bounds to her Virtue, Capacity, and Induſtry. Manum ſuam miſit ad fortia:* She that knows how to employ her Fingers ſo well, knows alſo how to employ her Arm, and when Neceſſity requires it, can ſhew that Heroick Courage, which gives her the Title of the *ſtrong Woman.* Is ſhe to reſiſt any violent Aſſaults of her Neighbours, to withdraw ill-gotten Goods out of an Injuſt Poſſeſſion, to maintain the Rights of Innocence againſt the Power and Subtilties of the Law, and relieve her oppreſſed Dependents? or, Is ſhe to buy

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and ſell, or to conquer ſuch Obſtacles as hinder her Deſigns, to encreaſe the limits of her Lordſhips, by ſome advantagious acquiſition, and to get a Victory over all the Policies of Envy and Treachery? This matchleſs Lady undertakes it, purſues it, and brings it to effect. *Roboravit fortitudine brachium ſuum.*

Beyond all this, ſays the Prophet, her miraculous Genius has taught her the Art of trafficking; ſhe knows how to tranſport the Grain and Profits ariſing from her Lands, as far as the *Indies*, and bring back in the ſame Ships the Riches of *Ophir* and *Tharſus*, with all the Gold and Silver and other things, of which her Family or her Country can ſtand in need. *Facta eſt quaſi navis inſtitoris, de longe portans panem.* A fine Conceit it is of *Solomon*, That her Ships are the figures of her two Hands, wonderfully skilful, and wonderfully ſucceſsful, both in giving out and receiving in; inſomuch, as that God bleſſing theſe at home, bleſſes thoſe when they are on the Sea, and the very Storms yielding an Obedience to the Benediction of God, pay them

them a Reſpect, and even help to bring them home to their Port.

But in all this the Miracle of her Parts, which is the moſt charming, and beſt deſerves to be publiſhed, is, that ſhe has made her Husband the Richeſt of Men, without impoveriſhing or hurting any Perſon, and without giving occaſion either to Heaven or Earth to complain of her: *Confidit in ea Cor Viri ſui, & ſpoliis non indigebit.*

There remains yet a Miracle in her Perſon, which in my opinion ſhould make her admired by Poſterity above all the reſt, and that is, That in all this buſtle of Traffick, and of the manage of her Houſehold Affairs, ſhe makes not the leaſt ſhew of any ſuch matter, but in occaſions where Decency engages her to be in the company of Knowing Men, raviſhes them with the manner of her Converſation.

Her delight and merit in theſe Converſations lies not in talking her ſelf, nor in mixing her Opinions and Reaſonings with their Arguments; ſhe holds, that the Rules of Wiſdom and Modeſty forbid her to appear before them, but in the quality of a Diſciple, and that ſhe ought to rank her

her ſelf as *Mary Magdalen* did, at the Feet of our Saviour: *Sedens ſecus pedes domini, audiebat verbum illius.*

True it is, that ſhe has not ſtudied, and would therefore be much in the wrong to reaſon with them upon high Myſteries: but, what is not to be found in other Women, ſhe poſſeſſes three Sciences in perfection, which raviſh theſe Maſters of Learning.

The firſt is, That ſhe knows how to put Queſtions that are the moſt pertinent, and to offer the fineſt Subjects, on which they can exerciſe their Parts. The ſecond is, That ſhe knows how to conceive clearly, and without difficulty, the Anſwers which they make. The third, That ſhe knows how to value them, and to ſhow this value, by excellent and ſincere Expreſſions; the truth of which appears in her Looks.

The ſoveraign Pleaſure of thoſe Men who know great things, is not to vent them in the Schools: one of the chief and moſt ancient Laws of the Schools is, That whatſoever is ſaid there is to be contradicted,

dicted, ſo that the Schools are as their Field of Battel, and the Standers-by as Witneſſes of their Triumph.

At leaſt, it appears to me to be very well ſaid of a ſolid Writer of our Times, That in thoſe Converſations where the Unlearned have a great deal of Wit and Modeſty, and the Learned a great deal of Wiſdom and Eloquence, the Delight and Honour of both is not unequally matched.

The great Character of this ſtrong Woman is compriſed in theſe words: *Fallax gratia & vana eſt pulchritudo Mulier timens dominum ipſa laudabitur.*

MAXIM

MAXIM XVIII.

Salus animæ melior eſt omni auro & argento ; & Corpus Validum quam Cenſus immenſus. Eccleſ. xxx.

PARAPHRASE.

Non eſt cenſus ſuper cenſum ſalutis nec oblectamentum ſuper gaudium Cordis.

Know, you who have a mind to be rich and happy in this Lower World, that there is no greater Treaſure than the Health of Body, and that you can aim at no Happineſs beyond the Joy of Heart : Loſe not theſe good things by running after other, and be convinced that an Empire is not to be compared to them.

Melior eſt mors quam Vita amara & requies æterna quam languor perſeverans.

Death is to be preferred before a Life of Bitterneſs and Affliction ; and it is more eaſie to be at reſt in a Grave, than to lye languiſhing on a Bed, and ſuffer for ſeveral years the inſupportable Wearineſs and Pains of a laſting Malady.

REFLECTIONS.

Life and Health are two of God's Preſents, which deſerve to be cheriſh'd and tenderly preſerved.

The Wiſe man fails not in this Care concerning Health, and it really is one of the moſt conſiderable Rules of Wiſdom, never to do what may hurt it, but ſtill to govern it with diſcretion.

The true method that is to be obſerved in relation to Health, is to tend it, as we would do a young Child of quality, taking the care neither to ſpoil him by too fond humourings and compliances, nor by unreaſonable conſtraints and ſeverities.

To effect this, it is evident, that we muſt both allow and deny our ſelves many things; but, What are thoſe things? and, at what times? Theſe are two Difficulties, which are the ground of many Diſputes, ſuch as are not well determined, becauſe we do not apply our ſelves to the right and ſole Miſtreſs, who can juſtly do it.

Some People conſult their Phyſicians, many take Advice of their Senſual Appetite,

tite, and blindly do what it counſels them; others, which are the cleareſt ſighted, apply themſelves to Nature, and conſult with her alone.

Indeed, the Phyſician often undertakes the matter, but it may be he exceeds in this the limits of his Title and Profeſſion. Phyſick was inſtituted by God for the recovery of Health, it may be queſtioned whether it were intended for the preſervation of it. At leaſt, we may conclude thus far, That Phyſicians are of no uſe to ſuch as find themſelves well, and ail nothing. Add to this, That Experience teaches us, that thoſe who conſult their Phyſician in time of health, to learn how to preſerve it, and live a long time, learn only by his Remedies how to become ſick and deſtroy themſelves.

Such Perſons as hearken to their Senſuality ſoon learn the way to dye, and flye to the Tomb before their time; though the Truth is, the Cordials it preſcribes are excellent, as Mirth, Wine, Good Cheer, Sleep, Play, and Eaſe, but it makes us take too much of them: and as the exceſs of good things makes the moſt mortal

Poiſon, ſo this kills more Men by its Baits than dye in the Field by the Sword, or are deſtroy'd in a Sedition by Violence and Injuſtice. Aſſuredly thoſe are but ill Advices for our Health, which come from our blind Appetite, and very dangerous Inſtincts are its interiour Perſwaſions and Impulſes.

Nature, in this point, is the ſole and true Miſtreſs to whom we are to hearken; ſhe knows what is requiſite for a Man, the quantity of Nourithment, and the quality; how much time he is to allow for Labour, how much for his Diverſion, how much for Sleep, what is to be the meaſure of each thing: She knows all this, and what is to be moſt admired; ſhe has inward motions and certain ways of informing us in every matter, which are marvelouſly intelligible; at leaſt, the Man that is wiſe underſtands them very well, and ſeldom deceives himſelf in them: it may be ſaid, that it is one of his principal and choiceſt Knowledges to diſtinguiſh the Calls of Reaſon and Neceſſity from thoſe of the Paſſions; and that amongſt his Principles, the moſt holy and beſt obſerved

ſerved one by him is, not to grant any thing to the latter, nor refuſe any thing to the former.

An ancient Writer has truly ſaid, That one of the moſt important Affairs of Wiſdom lodged in the Mind of Man, is to well diſtinguiſh between thoſe Voices or Calls which are within Man, they have been reckoned to be ſix or ſeven, *Reaſon*, *Inſtinct*, *Humour*, *Appetite*, *Temptation*, *Inſpiration*, and *Grace*; each one of theſe Domeſticks lodged within us has his Call, or Impulſe, by which he puts us upon Actions pleaſing to him, and makes us to will as he does.

Their Ends are infinitely differing and oppoſite, but the great difficulty, and the original from whence ariſe all our Misfortunes, is, that their Voices are much alike, and that it is eaſie to be deceived in them.

Senſual Appetite counterfeits in its Call the Voice of Reaſon and Neceſſity; Humour, that of Inſtinct and Nature: Temptation, that of Inſpiration and Grace. Now, to take one for the other, to reſiſt

this, and comply with that, is no leſs than to periſh.

Happy are the Wiſe! It is Wiſdom only that is able to diſtinguiſh amongſt this Confuſion of Voices; at every Call of our Heart, and every Impulſe we feel, ſhe informs us to whom the Voice belongs.

From this admirable Intelligence of the Wiſe it comes that they are able to chuſe the ways of preſerving their Health, by following the Orders of the Phyſician that is within them, and underſtands their Interiour; whereas the Misfortune of the other Phyſician is, that they cannot penetrate ſo far with their Sight; they ſee but the outſide of the Sick Perſon, and muſt devine for all the reſt.

MAXIM

MAXIM XIX.

Utere quaſi homo frugi his quæ tibi apponuntur. Eccleſ. xxxi.

PARAPHRASE.

Feed and nouriſh your ſelf, that you may live, and eat not but for your Suſtenance: take no more than Nature requires, and what is neceſſary to ſupport its Strength and Life: comply not with your Senſual Appetite, and let your Heart never feel ſo much ſhame and apprehenſion of your becoming like to a Beaſt, as in thoſe Actions in which they reſemble us, and that are common to us with them.

Cor ſplendidum in epulis epulæ enim ejus diligenter fiunt.

A good and noble Heart is chiefly ſhewn by the manner of ordering his Table, ſuch a Heart will cauſe it to reliſh of its own frankneſs, of its cleanneſs and purity; an indecent Table is the mark of a negligent Mind and a diſorderly Life.

Engage not your ſelf to be at thoſe Feaſts where you muſt ſtrive to win the Prize, and conteſt who ſhall carry away the Honour of being the moſt immodeſt and the leaſt ſober of the Company; this is a War in which many have died miſerably on the Bed of Diſhonour, full of all the Shame and all the Crimes of Brutality: What Death can be more infamous and fatal?

Diligentes in vino noli provocare.

Diſorderly Repaſts are the deſtruction of Mankind, and the Puniſhment of Intemperance is the ſame in our days as it was in the time of the firſt Sinner; I mean, it is Death.

What differs, is, that the Gluttony of the Firſt Man condemned us only to dye at an old Age, and in our extream Caducity; whereas our Gormandizing ſentences us to dye in our Youth. There are few that dye of old Age, moſt People fall by their Exceſs: Wine was created to ſolace and fortifie, not to extinguiſh our Reaſon, nor to weaken our Minds.

Vinum in jucunditatem creatum eſt & non inebrietatem.

Wine

Wine drank with moderation begets Strength in the Underſtanding, Joy in the Heart, and Health in the Body.

Exultatio animæ & Corporis Vinum moderate ſumptum.

REFLECTIONS.

Man's Body, ſo long as it is ſupported by an Immortal Soul, is the moſt upright and the moſt beautiful of all Bodies, but when it comes to be ſeparated from this, of all Carcaſſes it is the moſt hideous and frightful; there is not that Corruption which is ſo horrid to behold, nor a Stench that is more inſupportable.

In like manner the Action of eating and drinking, when it is dead, and is not animated by ſome ſpiritual aim or intention to pleaſe God, is undoubtedly one of the moſt ſhameful Actions, and moſt unbeſeeming a Man, and ſuch as the Angels behold with the greateſt averſion.

But when it is accompanied and helped by that ſupernatural Intention, it is both honourable and holy, and we have few things without us, by which we can more handſomly ſhow our Dignity and Difference

rence from Beaſts, than by this, although it ſeems to put us into the ſame rank and equality with them.

The manner of Eating for Beaſts is, to eat at *all hours*, to eat fouly and greedily, to eat by themſelves, and hardly to endure the company of another Beaſt: the way of Eating for Man ſhould carry Marks of the Superiority and Soveraignty that belongs to him: Decency, Neatneſs, Order, and Magnificency, with other royal Properties, ſhould adorn his Table, who is the Maſter of Beaſts, to ſhew the diſtance there is between him and his Slaves.

He ought to be regular, as to the hours of Eating, a thing not impracticable by the poorer ſort; to be neat and clean in what belongs to it, which is not hard to be compaſſed by ſuch as are the leaſt rich, and to have his Table handſom, and of free acceſs to his Friends, which is not to be diſpenſed with in Perſons of great quality, and is ordinary enough with thoſe of a ſmall fortune, who have large Hearts, ſuch as eſteem nothing their own, in which a Friend has not a ſhare.

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The very Angels, in the opinion of the holy Biſhop of *Geneva*, could not diſpenſe with this, were they transformed to Men, and to come and converſe with us in the World, they would live like Angels to their very Table. Here lies the Honour of a Spiritual Nature, to be able to deſcend to the reſemblance of Beaſts, by Actions, in which it reſembles them leſs than ever; and where it appears more clearly than in any other occaſion, how infinitely far our Nature is raiſed above them!

MAXIM XX.

Si dormieris non timebis; quieſces, & ſuavis erit, ſomnus tuus. Prov. iii.

PARAPHRASE.

Be faithful to God all day, and your Sleep will be diſturbed by no Fears in the Night; you will ſpend it happily, for nothing within you will want its Repoſe, and your Reſt will be perfect, becauſe it will be entire, both Body and Soul enjoying it.

RE-

REFLECTIONS.

Sleep is duly reckoned amongſt the Bleſſings and the Eaſes which God has been pleaſed to mix with the Bitterneſs and Troubles of this miſerable Life.

We cannot term it better, than to call it a Preſent, which is ſent us each day from the Creator, and which enters into our Veins, as a prevention to Diſeaſes, and a help to repair our Strength, interrupting for ſeven or eight hours all the Toils and Diſpleaſures of the Day.

St. *Auguſtine* calls it a Contrivance of the Supreme Goodneſs, which like a Mother who tends the Cradle of her beloved Child, comes ſoftly to us a nights, to rock us aſleep, and drive from about us whatſoever may diſappoint the good Reſt it deſigns us.

Thus this Goodneſs keeps from us Cares, Fears, Diſquiets, and all Thoughts of Buſineſs, of Law-Suits, Projects, and Deſigns: this it is that ſtops them in their way, and hinders their acceſs into our Mind, by ſudden Vapours drawn out of

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its ſtock of Love, which quite forbid their entrance.

This it is alſo which can keep our Mind from being a Diſquiet to it ſelf, and hinder it from ſpending the hours of night in toiling and employing it ſelf indiſcreetly: this Goodneſs ties up its Hands, if I may ſo expreſs it; I mean, that it finds out certain Chains, by which it faſtens all the Faculties of our Soul to their repoſe, and keeps them in a ſtate of ſtilneſs and inaction, but does all this ſo ſweetly, and with ſuch a care of hurting us, that in the height of this fettering and violence we feel nothing but Content and Pleaſure: *Dormies & ſuavis erit ſomnus tuus.*

In a word, if according to the holy Father's interpretation of theſe words, *Lazarus Dormit*, it ſignifies to be dead, to be in that condition we may learn in laying our ſelves to ſleep, that there is nothing more eaſie than to dye.

I ſay then, that Sleep in us is one of the Wonders of God's Providence, and that it is an alluſion, what ſome People hold, who ſay, it is a ſhameful Spectacle to the Angels to ſee a Wiſe Man drowned in Sleep: the

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gels have come down to behold a God ſleeping in his Cradle, and they have adored him with as great reſpect there, as they adore him in Paradiſe.

Sleep is ſo far from being an Infamy to us, that many learned Doctors have been bold to ſay, it is one of the moſt honourable Conditions belonging to our Nature, and the leaſt contrary to Grace.

Devout Perſons are continually complaining, that there ſcarce paſſes an hour in the day in which they fall not into ſome light Faults, and become diſpleaſing to God by unavoidable Weakneſſes and Lapſes. This Misfortune does not befal them a nights; the time of Sleep is the only time, in which they perfectly keep their Innocence: the ſame Grace and Virtue they have at the hour they go to ſleep, the ſame is found in them entire at the moment they awake: their happy Soul, ſurrounded with the Vapours I have ſpoken of, is like the Sun hidden by a black Cloud; as much as it is obſcured by that hideous Darkneſs, it ſtill retains notwithſtanding all its Luſtre, and comes forth as bright and beautiful as it ever was before.

I ſay

I ſay further, and I ſay this after the holy Fathers, who have experienced it, and other of the Learned who have writ it, That what never befel the Sun, which is to become more glorious and bright, being beſet with Rain and Clouds, than it was in clear weather, has hapned to great Saints at the times they have been ſeized with ſleep. Such was the time which God choſe to viſit the chief of the Apoſtles in, the beloved Diſciples, the *Magdalens*, the *Catherines*, and *Thereſia's*, and other illuſtrious Saints, who have been then elevated even into the Rank of *Seraphims*, by the moſt ſublime Acts of Love and Sanctity: *Ego dormio & Cor meum vigilat.* But this is not the proper place for expounding theſe words, ſince I ſhould ſtep too far from my Subject; to the Point.

It cannot but be owned, that Sleep may be abuſed and turned into a ſhameful Brutiſhneſs: *A Misfortune*, ſays St. *Chryſoſtom*, *that ought never to be ſeen*; but it is ſeen too often, and never fails to happen when we lay our ſelves to reſt, forgetting to follow thoſe Rules which Wiſdom and Providence have preſcribed to us, to the end we may not ſleep like Beaſts.

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In truth, it muſt be confeſſed, to behold a Man riſen from Table, where he has carried himſelf like an Atheiſt, and plunged both Body and Soul in the Filth of a ſcandalous Drunkenneſs, to ſee him throw himſelf on the Ground, and ſleep in the face of Heaven; can there be a more ſhameful Spectacle! Let him be an *Holofernes*, attended and worſhipped by an Army of an Hundred thouſand Men, all this Attendance hinders him not in that condition from being a Horror to the Angels, and being a Womans Victim, who cuts off his Head, and carries it ſafe away, whilſt Devils ſeize the Remains of that drunken Carcaſs. *Quaſi Cadaver putridum, illamentatus atque inſepultus, deſcendes in profundum laci.*

This way of ſleeping is certainly the moſt diſmal thing that can happen to Man. The King *Sedecias* having known that he was made the Sport of the Court of *Babylon*, whilſt he ſlept after this manner, died through the diſpleaſure he took at it. *Alexander, Socrates, Cato*, and other of thoſe old Worthies, have bluſhed at their being in ſuch a condition before they came

to

to be quite awake, ſo much ſenſe remaining with them in the midſt of their Folly: and they have wept, in having hid it from the Eyes of the World, to find they could not hide it from themſelves.

I own beſides, that it is not a proper means to cauſe quiet and good Sleeps, to have our Bed and Chamber too richly and voluptuouſly adorned; what Reſt can there be taken in the view of ſo great Debts, or Couzenages, or Pride? *How many dreadful Cries*, ſays *Salvian*, *are heard all night within the Conſcience of that Man, whoſe wretched Sleep coſts ſo much Money, and ſo many Sins? Can he ſpend the hours any other way, than in ſadly thinking and in ſaying to himſelf*, Menſes vacuos & Noctes laboriosas Enumeravi mihi. *For theſe twenty years I have done nothing towards my Salvation, my days have been days of Debauch, of Impieties, of Wrongs to the Poor; my nights have been nights of Diſquiet, Torment, and Deſpair; Menſes Vacuos & Noctes laboriosas.*

Think, when you go to take your reſt on this rich Bed of State, that ſuch was the Bed from which a *Balthaſar* beheld the

Hand of God writing on the Wall the Sentence of his Death, and his Damnation ſigned in Heaven.

That the rich Glutton, whilſt he took the pleaſure of ſeeing himſelf thus magnificently lodged, heard a Voice whiſper in his Ear, telling him, he was expected in another World, and that he muſt dye within an hour; *Et hæc quæ Paraſti, Cujus erunt?*

That an *Antiochus*, inſtead of meeting here with that ſweet Reſt you ſeek, found burning Flames kindled within his Bowels, with Cholicks and Convulſions, which have made him roar like one in Hell, turning his ſtately Bed into a Scaffold, where his interiour Executioners have torn him for ſeveral months, till Death has come and pulled him out of their Hands to put him into infernal ones. *Mortuus eſt & ſepultus in inferno.*

But I go beyond my Argument: what I maintained, is true, That Sleep taking poſſeſſion of you, according to the Rules of Providence, puts you into a condition that is not only neceſſary, but honourable.

The Rules of this Providence are fitted to your Conveniency and Needs, do you conform your ſelf therefore exactly to them, and accuſtom your ſelf to follow as near as you can all its Commands and Counſels.

You deſire that your Sleep may be ſweet and peaceable, Providence would have it ſo too, and has choſen for it the night time; do not you change this for the day, and go not to Bed at Five a Clock in the morning, when the Sun does riſe.

It would not have you ſpend above ſeven or eight hours in ſleeping, do not employ ten or eleven in it, but mind what the Phyſicians ſay, That a Man who lies in Bed ten or eleven hours, comes out of it ever leſs healthful; and what the Caſuiſts add, Ever leſs innocent and pure than he went into it.

The Eye of God, ſays St. *Gregory*, *abhors the ſight of a Man in Bed at Noon:* And if ever you be found there ſo late, he will ſend *Solomon*'s Ghoſt to your Bed-ſide, which pulling you by the Arm, will repeat thoſe words inſpired long ſince into him, on purpoſe to be ſaid to the Sluggards of all

times; *Vſque quo Piger dormiès? quando Conſurges à Somno tua? Paululum dormies paululum dormitabis paululum Conſeres Manus ut dormias: & veniet tibi quaſi Viator Egeſtas, & pauperies quaſi vir Armatus.* Till when, O Sloathful, will you ſleep? have you not rubbed your Eyes, and ſtretched your Arms ſufficiently? has not your Head been more than once raiſed and let fall again upon the Pillow, asking *a little time, and yet a little longer*, and for a third bout, ſtill *a little longer time*, until that God's Malediction enters within your Walls, follow'd by Diſorder, Libertiniſm, and Poverty, which will ſpare your Family as little as it has done ſuch as have been richer than yours? *Pauperies quaſi Vir Armatus.*

This is not all; what the ſame Providence recommends particularly to you, to make your Sleeps ſound and quiet, is, that you employ your ſelf in the day time, taking ſo much Pains about your Affairs, as that you may find at night, when the time comes of your going to Bed, ſomething of Wearineſs in your Body, but in your Mind no manner of Diſquiet, no

Sin

Sin in your Conſcience, nor any Diſturbance from your Paſſions, to hinder the reſt prepared for you by the Divine Goodneſs. Act ſo well, as that your Deſigns, your Undertakings, Hopes, and even your Joys as well as Griefs, may be laid to ſleep with you, and lodge that quiet Silence in your Soul, as may make it not be troubled by it ſelf, or any thing about it, ſo that you may have cauſe to ſay, at the time of ſhutting your Eyes, *In pace in idipſum dormiam, & requieſcam; quoniam tu domine Singulariter in ſpe Conſtituiſti me.*

The laſt and moſt important Rule is, That your laſt Action before you ſleep, and the firſt after you wake, muſt be to pray. Be ſure you fail not to begin and end this way, each day you have to live, and take often into your Mind this true Saying of the Holy Fathers, That *Sleep is the Figure of our Death, and Waking the Figure of our Reſurrection.* The laſt words of a dying Man, are, to recommend his Soul to God, *In Manus tuas, Domine, commendo animam meam*; the firſt when he riſes again, will be to pay his Adoration to God, when ſtretching out his Arms to-

wards his Maker, he ſhall raiſe himſelf up to him, by Acts of a perfect Love and Holineſs, *Dormivi & Somnum cepi & exurrexi, & adhuc ſum tecum.* This is the true method of the Devotion of Chriſtians for each day of their Life.

Remember what I have ſaid in another place, That all times are proper for the exerciſing Acts of Holy Love, ſince the God you love is near you at all times: *When the Sun goes away he is not gone*, ſays *Solomon*; God is at your Beds head in the ſilent beginning of the Night, diſcourſing with your Mind by private Inſpirations, and helping you to reſt holily, through the ſweetneſs of this interiour Converſation.

In the Morning he is alſo with you, expecting to meet with an Expreſſion from you of the Truſt you repoſe in him, ſuch as may ſhew you depoſite with him all your Cares of every day: and whereas he fails not to be preſent before you at the moment of your waking, fail not on your part to raiſe your Eyes and ſtretch your Arms out to him, *Anima mea deſideravit te in Nocte ſed & Spiritu meo, in præcordiis*

meis de mane vigilabo ad te. 'O my Beloved, ſaid a holy Soul, how innumerable 'have my Thoughts been of you this 'Night, how many Sighs, how many 'Tears have you coſt me! I ran after 'you through Deſart places, where it was 'all darkneſs. *De Mane Vigilabo ad te.* 'Queſtion not, my Beloved, but that I love 'you, ſince the firſt motion of my wa-'king Heart tends to enquire, whether I 'be ſo happy as to be beloved by you ſtill 'this day, and to learn, that you are nea-'rer me than I imagined by my Fears.

MAXIM XXI.

Non habet amaritudinem Converſatio illius, nec tædium Convictus illius. Sap. viii.

PARAPHRASE.

Such as converſe familiarly with GOD learn how to converſe well with Men; their Hearts are free from peeviſhneſs and gall, and their diſcourſe in company proves neither tireſom nor offenſive.

To become acceptable to Men in our daily Converſation, we muſt follow the Rules that are to be obſerved, for preventing our being diſpleaſing to God in the interiour Diſcourſes of our Thoughts.

REFLECTIONS.

Amongſt all the Entertainments Nature has provided for us, to give eaſe to the tediouſneſs our Baniſhment, during this mortal Life, there is not any ſo decent and ſo pleaſing as the meeting of Company to converſe one with another.

This Inclination of mutually communicating our Thoughts, was born in us with our immortal Soul; they both derive themſelves from the ſame origin, that is, they come from the Boſom of God; the one and the other is framed according to the Pattern of what paſſes eternally amongſt the three Perſons of the Trinity, Perſons adorable and infinitely happy, becauſe their Society and Communication is eternal.

To converſe with his Likeneſs is the Eternity of God, the Life of an Angel,

and

and as for Man, it is the cure of the Cares and Pains of his Mortality, whilſt he ſojourns here below amongſt Beaſts: One of our Priviledges and moſt glorious Elevations above them is, that they cannot partake of this Benefit.

It is a ſad thing nevertheleſs, that amongſt all the Cuſtoms divinely inſtituted, this, which both Nature and Grace has ſetled amongſt us, ſhould be blacken'd with the greateſt Faults, and be the moſt ſhamefully abuſed of any.

No Man but knows how things go in this kind, how numerous the Sins are that grow from unchaſte and detracting Tongues, and how many Tears theſe daily cauſe: All our Misfortunes, in a manner, ſpring from this Fountain head.

You would know which way this may be remedied, the Remedy has been asked and fought for during theſe many years, but no one can boaſt of having found it out as yet, and there is cauſe to fear it never will be found; indeed, we may well doubt it, but yet we need not doubt withal, but that each particular Perſon may acquit himſelf of all the Duties belonging

to

to a Civil Life, and frequent company, when it ought to be done, without injuring his Fidelity to God, or the Obligation he lies under, not to expose himself to the manifest danger of mortal Sin.

The Means which the Holy Scriptures and our Spiritual Guides propose for this, are several; I here present you with a short Collection of their Counsels and Instructions relating to this Subject.

1. 'When you are invited, says *Solo-*
'*mon*, to go into such Company as will
'present you with Poison hid in the bot-
'tom of the most delicious Liquors, and
'where you are sure to meet with the
'blackest Crimes, mixed with the most
'inviting Pleasures, that is, when they go
'about to draw you into one of those Hou-
'ses, from whence you never fail to re-
'turn, but more faulty, and a greater Sin-
'ner than you went in; whatsoever Rea-
'sons may be urged, or Entreaties made,
'or Violence used to you, take heed you
'never yield; resist, and be constant in
'your resistance; go not to seek for Plea-
'sure and Sin, where you must meet with
'Death and Hell: *Viæ domus ejus, pene-*

trantes

trantes in interiora Montis, Prov. vii.

2. 'When you happen to be making 'other Viſits, in which you have been 'harmleſly engaged, without the foreſight 'of any hurt or danger, if nevertheleſs there 'appears ſuch, ſays St. *John* the Evange- 'liſt, as ſoon as any ſigns of it be ſhewn, 'as ſoon as you hear any bold Blaſphemy 'pronounced, or words of high Impudence, 'which ſcandalize you, and terrifie your 'Conſcience; flye away without delibera- 'tion, and ſuffer not the Health of your 'Soul to be longer expoſed to ſo bad an 'Air, in a place where amongſt all that 'are about you, laughing without con- 'troul, there is not one perhaps but has 'the Plague and Sin lodged in his Heart: *Exite de illa populus meus, ut ne participes ſitis delictorum ejus, & de plagis eis non accipiatis.* Apoc. xviii.

3. 'But if matters ſtand in that way, as 'will not allow you to take your flight, at 'leaſt take the liberty to ſpeak and declare 'your Mind boldly, do like the Prophet '*Iſaiah*, arm your Looks with the Zeal 'and Anger of a *Seraphim*; put on a 'Forehead of Braſs, not to be daunted nor

'made

'made ashamed, and let your Temper shew 'a Courage without Pity. In this posture present your self before these Libertines, who neither regard God's Presence, nor yours, and by some generous Remonstrance, that may set before their Eyes the Infamy of their Brutishness, make them hide their Heads and Faces for shame; *Ut Videant, & sentiant, & urantur.* This was the way of the ancient Prophets, and is still the way of such as are true Saints in the Church of the Son of God.

4. But then, in case you should find your Courage and Parts not sufficient for this Undertaking, and that you should fear, instead of confounding the Sinners, they might scandalize the Company, by turning Devotion into Ridicule: *Keep your Tongue silent,* says the Prophet, *but let your Eyes speak.*

'You must, says he, make these Atheists 'see in your Eyes and Looks a dreadful 'Sadness and Horror, when they begin to 'open their Mouths, and vomit up in the 'presence of Persons of Honour the Filth 'and Corruption that lies within their 'Souls: *Per tristitiam vultus, corrigitur animas*

animus delinquentis. Say not a word, but be ſad; this way has had Succeſs in the correcting of Sinners, whom Noiſe and Diſpute could never ſoften.

Imitate that generous Nun of St. *Clare*'s Order, who having heard ſome obſcene Complements that were made her by a company of Debauchees, ſhewed firſt in her Cheeks a ſudden Fire of Anger, which preſently after turned into a dying Paleneſs and inconſolable Sadneſs, both accompanied with ſo many moving Tears, as touched at the very inſtant the Hearts of theſe Wretches, making them retire away in confuſion, and putting them upon beginning a Penance in the Church two or three days after, which laſted with them to the end of their Lives. *Per triſtitiam vultus, Corrigitur animus delinquentis.*

After all, the greateſt Maſterpiece of Human Wit in ſuch occaſions, is ſhewn when a Man of great Parts and rare Expreſſion, without ſaying any word of Offence to theſe ill perſons, as ſoon as he perceives them ready to take the liberty of mocking at the Myſteries of Religion, knows how with Addreſs, at the firſt word

of

of Impiety, to break off the Diſcourſe, and introduce in its room another, ſo taking and agreeable, as may draw the attention of the whole Company, and give that ſatisfaction even to the Libertines themſelves, as may make them aſhamed of the brutiſh things they were going to utter, when they compare them with his noble Thoughts and way of Converſation.

This was the Artifice practiſed by *Solomon*, when thoſe unbelieving Princes appeared before his Throne, who were ready to reaſon indiſcreetly againſt the Truths of his Religion: without ſhewing any Signs that he would contradict them, or make them ſee their Ignorance, he began to entertain them with Diſcourſes of the Greatneſs of the God whom he adored, ſpeaking ſo divinely on this Subject, as raiſed their admiration ſo high by the things he ſaid, as that hours paſſed away with them in pleaſure, without minding how the time went; and all this while they laid their Fingers upon their Lips, leſt ſome Word or Noiſe ſhould come out, that might interrupt him: *Sermonicante me, plura, manus ori ſuo imponent.*

This

This is, I ſay, an admirable way to divert ill Diſcourſes, but ſuch as I muſt ingeniouſly confeſs is ſomewhat too high to be propoſed as an Example.

It is eaſie to admire a Man who diſcourſes at this rate, but where lies the Means to imitate him? The undertaking of it, by one leſs wiſe, would have but a ſad effect.

For, as nothing is more divine and raviſhing than the Eloquence of a *Solomon*, who is able to ſpeak before all Companies to the Dignity of the Matter on any Subject, though never ſo unforeſeen, and to entertain them for many hours, without any ſtop of their Admiration; ſo there is nothing more diſtaſtful than to light into the converſation of ſuch Perſons as are always talking, and never talk to the purpoſe, yet will not ſuffer one to interrupt them.

Thoſe are not the Perſons nevertheleſs moſt to be apprehended; ſuch as theſe you muſt take the greateſt care to avoid.

I have obſerved, that Indiſcreet Perſons are amongſt Company juſt the ſame thing as thoſe we call Heedleſs and Blockheads are

are amongſt Wares in a Store-houſe; where theſe come, there is always ſomething thrown down, broken, or ſpoiled, and Matter ever made for Complaint and Chiding. The like happens by our Converſation in the Viſits we make one-another; for, whereas great ſtore of Company meets in theſe occaſions, and that Diſcourſe muſt therefore fall upon variety of Subjects, ſome unlucky Matter ſtill happens, for want of Care to prevent it: when People meet thus, they uſually ſtrive to divert themſelves by harmleſs Raileries, entring into ſome little War of mutual Reproaches and Repartees, very pleaſing to Perſons of Wit; but when there happens to be ſuch there as want Diſcretion and Judgment, and know not the Rules of Civility or Common Sence, it is a Misfortune to be one of the Company: There ever happens then, in theſe Sportings and Wreſtlings of Good Humour, ſome Blow to be given that goes beyond Play, and fetches Blood; there is ever ſome Mind wounded, ſome conſiderable Secret diſcloſed, ſome Confidence betrayed; there is ſome Perſon of Worth that repents him of having

having come amongſt Fools, that treat him ill, taking his Civilities for Injuries; there is ever ſome one of a jealous and nice Temper, that goes away with a bleeding Heart.

Non habet amaritudinem Converſatio illius, nec tædium Convictus illius: It is the Property of *Wiſdom* to make our Converſation become like that of the Angels, yielding us all the Joys of Mind that a familiarity of Souls can produce amongſt Perſons who perfectly love one-another.

A Wiſe Man, whilſt he converſes, has ways of letting looſe his Heart to his Friends, ways of jeſting, and making himſelf merry with them to the full ſcope of Friendſhip, without ceaſing nevertheleſs to continue all this while admirably wiſe, and without breaking one Law of Decency or Reſpect: he can likewiſe, at times of magnificent Entertainments, and upon occaſion of publick Rejoicings, where Heaven would have him edifie good Company, by conforming himſelf to their Example, according to the Rules of Honour and Fitneſs; he can, I ſay, add a Livelineſs and Luſtre to the Serenity of his Words and

Countenance, not only able to raviſh with Pleaſure thoſe he entertains, but to infuſe a Piety into them, much ſooner than the unbecoming and conſtrained Devotions which the Scrupulous are ſeen to practice in Churches.

You will ask me perhaps in what Book *Wiſdom* has put down the Rules of ſuch an extraordinary Conduct; I anſwer you, In None: *Wiſdom* ſends Men into Company, and about their Affairs, without ſaying a word to them; *Mitte Sapientem, & nil dicas illi:* but when they come there, it inſpires them ſecretly with the Words they are to ſay, and the Actions they are to do.

I conclude this Subject with two words of Advice; the firſt, Make your Self wiſe: the ſecond, When you are ſo, go boldly into Company, and do as you pleaſe.

MAXIM

MAXIM XXII.

Propoſui hunc adducere mecum ad convivendum, Sciens quoniam mecum Communicabit de bonis. Sap. viii.

PARAPHRASE.

I have met with Peace of Heart by converſing with God, his Preſence is a Riſing Light, that diſperſes the Darkneſs, lays the Winds, quiets the Storms within us, and begets in Man a Celeſtial Tranquility.

Amongſt the Felicities of this Life, a principal one is, the Peace or Interiour Quiet, which our dying Saviour left in the World, to be the Inheritance of his Elect.

We loſe this Peace by many and differing Occaſions. Here follow ſeveral Maxims, which may help you to prevent this Diſorder, and to keep thoſe dreadful Noiſes from entring within you, which outward and unforeſeen Accidents do produce.

'Tis true, that theſe terrible Sounds are very frequent, but *Peace*, ſays the Spouſe, *is where my God is, and where I have the Bleſſing to converſe with him.*

REFLECTIONS.

I ſaid, that theſe Noiſes were frequent, and I may ſay withal, that they are univerſal.

There are many Storms and Agitations in the Air we breath, many upon the Earth where we dwell, which we count ſo firm, many, and more than any where elſe, are in the immortal Soul, by which we live. There ſcarce paſſes an hour wherein our Thoughts are not toſſed ſeveral ways, and our Reaſon does not fall at odds with our Paſſions.

In like manner Cities, Provinces, and other Aſſemblies of Men, are but ſo many Seas, where it is a rare thing to meet with a calm day: we ſail all of us upon theſe Tempeſtuous Billows, but yet it does not neceſſarily follow, that our Minds ſhould be ſhaken by them. Man's Soul depends not on the Veſſel that wafts it, much leſs

on

on the tempeſtuous Noiſes reſounding round about him, or the ſtrange Revolutions, that amaze ſo many Perſons; give an Ear you may to them, but have nothing to do there, more than to behold the buſie Medlers in the midſt of thoſe Whirlwinds, going this way, and that way, as they are carried and driven.

How ſweet a thing it is to obſerve with a calm Spirit the Tempeſt of a Mind where Paſſion reigns without controul.

Whenſoever the Winds begin to riſe, let us make haſte to get into the Haven, let us flye to God as long as the Storm laſts, let us remain cloſe to this dear Spouſe, converſing with Him, and asking His Counſels: Then whilſt we enjoy the ſweet of this Divine Familiarity, ſupported between His Arms, let us from thence behold the ſtrange Agitations of the World, and tell Him what our Thoughts are of them.

Treat with God in theſe conjunctures as you uſe to do with the Perſons you love: When there happens ſome unexpected Change in the Publick Affairs, or that there ſtarts up ſome News of high

importance, it is a Pleaſure to us to tell it one-another, and to communicate our Opinions and Conjectures thereupon. Take the ſame Pleaſure with God, and ſhew him what you think of it, and all you have been told: True it is, All this is known to him before it was ever ſpoken of, but it is no leſs true, that he loves you, and that he would learn from your ſelf not only what paſſes in your own Houſe and private Cloſet, but in the Common wealth alſo, and amongſt the People. As ſoon as you ſhall hear of any Matter hapning ſtrangely and unexpectedly, and that makes a great noiſe and diſturbance, go and diſcourſe with him about it, who expects you to this end; ſay to him with *David*, That the Waters have raiſed their Voices; That there are great Tempeſts upon the Sea, and great Tumults in the World; That Chance has alter'd the Affairs of the Earth, and made ſtrange Changes in the Stations of Men, by *ſetting up* and *pulling down* beyond belief, although our Eyes behold it: *Mirabiles Elationes Maris.* But, my God, you *may* ſay to him,

Eleva verunt flumina vocem ſuam.

that which is moſt to be wonder'd at in theſe Downfals, is, to ſee the Man who riſes upon another's Ruine imagine he is ſeated at that heighth for ever. Theſe little Inſects carried up by the Waves to the Clouds, look upon themſelves with as much Pride in this Elevation, as if they were ſeated upon firm Rocks, and forget that their Station depends wholly upon the Winds: all theſe Waves which Fortune has ſtirred up, and raiſed ſo high, will make but a moments appearance; at the ſame time they are riſen from their lowneſs, they are returning back to it again.

The Ambitious, who mount thus high and get at ſuch a diſtance from their former littleneſs, riſe to this pitch, only to make the greater noiſe in the World by their Fall, and theſe very Mountains of their Greatneſs turn to their ruine, by falling back upon them, where they miſerably periſh, and lye buried in this Rubbiſh.

But the Reports of theſe Changes amongſt Creatures are of ſmall importance; the News that pleaſes and concerns

me moſt; and which my Heart is continually repeating, as the Angels are ſtill telling it over and over to one another without ceaſe, is, that he whom we love does never change: *Mirabiles elationes Maris Mirabilis in altis dominus*: You, my God, are the ſame this day that you ever were, and will eternally be the ſame: the immovable perpetuity of your Power, and of your Word, makes the Glory and Happineſs of thoſe that ſerve you, *Idem ipſe es & anni tui non deficient*, yet give me leave to ſay, that what appears the moſt to be admired, and moſt pleaſes me, is, that at the ſame time when your infinite Goodneſs gives me the News of the Perſeverance of your Grace and Protection on my behalf, I can return you the News of the Eternity of my Love. The Heavens and Earth will change; my Goods, my Houſe, my Friends, my Health, my Body, my Fortune, and my Life, muſt alſo change; they are changing at this inſtant, and at every hour they change, but my Love ſhall never alter: I will love you as long as I ſhall live, as often as I ſhall draw my Breath, as laſtingly as you will

be

be my God. *Deus Cordis mei, & pars mea Deus in æternum.*

MAXIM XXIII.

Erit allocutio Cogitationis meæ, & tædii mei. Sap. viii.

PARAPHRASE.

With God will I depoſite all my Cares, my Fears, and Troubles; ſhould his Providence and Juſtice deny to allow me that Conſolation my Hopes aim at, at leaſt I ſhall have the Happineſs to have talked with him, and ſhewn ſure Marks of my Reſpect, and the Truſt I repoſe in him.

From the Diſturbances that happen in the World, let us paſs to thoſe which particularly touch and concern our ſelves: let us make God acquainted with the Diſquiets and Pains we undergo, by reaſon of our Affairs, and let us addreſs our ſelves to him in the ſame words, which being dictated by him heretofore to a holy Spouſe, had a miraculous effect. *Confirma me Deus,*

Deus, & reſpice ad opera Manuum mearum, ut hoc, quod credens Cogitavi per te fieri poſſe perficiam.

REFLECTIONS.

There are uſually lodged in our Hearts certain Deſigns upon which our whole Faculties are bent, ſuch as our Imagination works upon night and day, to find out the Means may make them ſucceed, in ſpight of the Difficulties and Hindrances in their way: if your Mind be taken up with any of this nature, inſtead of applying your ſelf unprofitably to Men, who either cannot or will not aſſiſt and comfort you, go and talk with God, tell him all the ſecret Thoughts of your Heart on this occaſion: *Exurge in occurſum meum & vide, tu domine Deus Virtutum.* I confeſs, O my Lord, that the Undertaking which you ſee diſquiets me, when I look on it on each ſide, ſhews me nothing but ill Preſages and Dangers of Ruine: would you pleaſe to look into it, you will own, that it ſtands in a ſad condition, and that I am to be pitied.

I neither can nor ought to forſake it; I have begun it in the view of Men and Angels, and both my Reputation and my Conſcience are concerned in it; the Honour of your Name, to which I have conſecrated my Blood and Life, the Good of my Neighbour, the Fidelity I owe to many Perſons of worth, who have built their Hopes upon my Word, would call for Vengeance againſt me, ſhould I deſiſt. All the indiſpenſable Laws of Neceſſity bind me to a Perſeverance, and to ſtand up with Courage againſt all Obſtacles: but my beſt Helps fail me, my Money, my Credit, and Favour: thoſe other Advantages, of which I had a proſpect formerly, have alſo diſappear'd of late; and ſuch as I may expect will come, approach with a very ſlow pace; the worſt of it is, that in the mean while Time runs ſpeedily on, ſo that through the Delays which Accidents cauſe, Death draws near and tells me, tho' all the reſt ſhould not be wanting, yet Time muſt fail me: I hear, methinks, its Voice every moment, like that of an Enemy at hand, threatning to deſtroy with my ſelf all my Deſigns and Hopes, and lay

us

us together in one Grave: What can I do in this Condition?

You that Rule in Hearts, O my God, you that infuſe into them whatſoever you pleaſe, whoſe Hands hold the Keys of every Treaſure, and have Strength to ſtop the Current of Time, notwithſtanding its violence, give me leave, O my Lord, to lift up my Eyes, and lay open my Sorrows to you; you cannot but ſee my Tears, but then you ſee my Sins withal, and yet your Mercy is not the leſs for that; if I be an Ingrateful Wretch, you are a GOD: it is none of my intent to demand Miracles of you, I only dare preſume to pour out my Tears at your Feet, and tell you with trembling, poor Nothing as I am, that your Pity asks of you great matters for me, and that your powerful Hand can do all things.

True it is, my deareſt Lord, as you inwardly tell me, that perhaps the ſucceeding of this Enterprize may leſs conduce to the Good of my Neighbour, and the Honour of your Name, than my Patience and Reſignation would do, whilſt you ſuffer Misfortune and Death to overthrow all

my

my Deſigns, and me to periſh under the ruines of my Labours; or elſe ſhould I live, and bear quietly the weight of my Ruine, perhaps it would prove more pleaſing to you, than if I ſhould paſs my days in Happineſs and Honour, by the lucky accompliſhment of what you put into my Mind.

It belongs to you, O my God, to determine which will pleaſe you beſt, who know how I ſhall appear before your Eyes in either Condition: but give me leave to ſay, that you who like to ſee this humble Reſignation in the Souls you cheriſh and have choſen; do not condemn in them however the ardent Deſires of effecting ſuch Deſigns as they may hope will bring Glory to your Name.

You are pleaſed when they ſay amorouſly and ſincerely; I am ready for all, do your Will with me; my Religion and my Life are bent to adore the Decrees of your Wiſdom; I adore them, and offer my ſelf a Sacrifice to them, but, my God, view my Heart, and do not refuſe to your Love the knowing my Inclinations, and the hearkening after my Sighs.

Well,

Well, my Divine Master, I look without Terror upon the Destruction you propose of my Designs and me; my whole Being adores your Providence, and answers, *Non sicut ego Volo, sed sicut tu*; but yet you forbid me not the Freedom, no more than you did to *Daniel*, to discover my Desires to you, and to send out my Sighs in your presence. I am a Nothing, and less yet than so, but nevertheless, amidst this Nothingness, wherein it is my due to place my self: I have a Voice and Tears able to reach to the Sublimity where you are; I call then, and I weep, trusting that you cannot behold the Tears which flow from my Eyes, without having the Will to know their Meaning; Shall I tell it you, my God, I weep to obtain Comfort from you, for the weakest of all your Creatures, to obtain that your Power may be glorified by granting me the Helps necessary for the accomplishment of that Work on which your Inspiration and Grace have put me: I speak after the Example of *Judith*, whose Resignation and Humility hinder'd her not from expressing her Desires to you. *Confirma me domine, &*

re-

reſpice ad opera manuum mearum, ut hoc, quod Credens Cogitavi per te fieri poſſe perficiam.

In ſhort, the thing that would bring me an infinite deal of Comfort, were, That the Angels, after having ſeen my Hearts ſubmiſſion to your Orders, and been Witneſſes that I am ready, like *Abraham*, to ſacrifice to you what is moſt dear to me in the World, and give up to your Will all my Deſires, though never ſo juſt and pleaſing, might have Right to ſay the ſame of me, which they ſaid to you heretofore, ſpeaking of *David*, *Deſiderium animæ ejus tribuiſti ei, & voluntate labiorum ejus non fraudaſti eum.*

I muſt confeſs, O my God, that you have no need of me to honour you either on Earth or in Heaven, ſince you are able by a word ſpeaking to produce millions of Angels and Seraphims, and millions of new Worlds, whereby you may receive more honour in one day than you can have from me during Eternity. I do own it, O Infinite Greatneſs, and yet you that know all things, O Adored Origin of all my Enterprizes, and Eternal Center of my Peace

Peace and Affections, you muſt needs know, that amongſt the accidental Joys of the Future Life, the greateſt, and thoſe which will touch us the neareſt, will be to ſee how our little Deſigns of this World here below, undertaken and happily accompliſhed through your Benediction, will prove an inexhauſtible Spring, from whence you will derive all the Glory that we are oblig'd to wiſh you.

Allow me then, O my God, to aſpire after this Happineſs, and to beg that you will crown my weak Endeavours with that Succeſs, by which I may hope you will be eternally honoured: for, what is Time to me, or Eternity it ſelf, unleſs I be ſomething to you in it?

MAXIM

MAXIM XXIV.

Veni, dilecte mi, Egrediamur in agrum, Commorremur in Villis. Cant. vii.

PARAPHRASE.

Where there is ſuch a Love amongſt Men, as that they cannot live with any eaſe aſunder, nor enjoy themſelves without a mutual communication of their Thoughts, it makes them uſually call upon one another in theſe words; *Come, let us leave the Town, and retire together into the Country.*

REFLECTIONS.

When a Man is placed on the great Theatre of this World, by holding ſome honourable Employment in the Affairs of State, or in thoſe of Juſtice, it is doubtleſs a Condition that affords ſome happy Moments, tho' often but ſad Days, and never fails to give occaſions of vexation.

After a Man has been ſitting in ſome Court, toiled with a Buſineſs that has laſted ſeven or eight hours, his Body and his Mind quite ſpent with Wearineſs, when he returns home in hope of getting a little Quiet, what a thing it is for him to find waiting at his Gate a number of Supplicants, who follow him into his Hall, up to his Chamber, into his very Cloſet, begging a moments audience, whilſt at the ſame time his Heart begs of him a little Reſpite to breath in, and cannot obtain it? What a kind of Life is this? Is it not for a Man to be baniſhed from himſelf in his own Houſe, and to be divorced from all that is dear to him in the World?

Obſerve, that beſides our ſelves there are three ſorts of Perſons which are no leſs dear to us, and ſtick as cloſe to our Hearts as does our Life, I mean our Family, our intimate and faithful Friends, and above all, our God and Maker.

To paſs whole days then, far from theſe precious Shares of us; to ſee from morning to night only Strangers, Men troubleſome, and whoſe Buſineſs it is to perſecute and torment us; I ſay once more, what

what is it but a Real Baniſhment?

And what Help is there for theſe Troubles? what Means is there to breath in quiet, at leaſt for ſome little time, unleſs it be to take our flight, as Nature and Heaven has taught us to do, and to carry with us into ſome Country Solitude thoſe inſeparable Perſons, whom our Heart is ſtill calling for at every moments abſence? *Veni dilecte mi*, ſays the Wife to her Huſband, the Son to his Father, ſays one true Friend to another, ſays the Underſtanding Man to himſelf, ſays the Devout Soul to its God; *Veni dilecte mi, egrediamur in agrum Commorremur in Villis.*

It is in this Solitude where you truly enjoy your Family, and your Family enjoys you, where you have nothing to do more than to mind it, by which you give your ſelf the Satisfaction you owe to your excellent good Nature: here it is where you find a renewing of your Life, with the poſſeſſion of theſe beloved Perſons, a Life that was loſt before in a labyrinth of publick affairs, where one meets with all manner of ways, except that of getting out of it, and with all manner of

Perſons, except thoſe we care for: *Ubi omnia niſi tu, ſed quid omnia ſine te?*

You will own, in this agreeable Retirement, the Truth of what a great Perſon of our Country ſaid, who lived in this latter Age, 'That a Man whom Heaven has well 'allotted in Wife and Children, is in his 'own Houſe, by the poſſeſſion of them at 'the higheſt pitch of Honour that Ambi-'tion can aim at, and that no Employ-'ment can be more glorious and pleaſing 'to him, than to rule there in ſweet Peace, 'where he duly and perfectly loves, and 'is beloved.

In this ſame Solitude it is, that you alſo truly enjoy your Friend; here his Time, his Life, and his Mind will be yours, as much as his own; here walking together in ſome ſolitary Grove, communicating your Thoughts, and entertaining one-another upon ſeveral Subjects, either of Morality, Hiſtory, or Policy, when you find that your Conceptions make a pleaſing Impreſſion in your Friend, and that his Anſwers bring you a ſuitable Return, you will have cauſe to make to one-another the noted Complement of thoſe ancient Friends:

Friends: *Alter alteri, Theatrum ſumus*; *I am your Theatre, and you are mine.* To have your attention to what I ſay, and receive your ſincere and undiſſembled Approbation, is an Honour more charming to me, than it would be to have the applauſe of Kings and Courts, or to be famed to after times by the Pens of the moſt celebrated Writers: *Alter alteri, Theatrum ſumus.*

The Delight you take in this kind is perfectly compleated, when in concluſion of *Serious Diſcourſes* you come to enjoy the Freedom of diverting one another by an eaſie communication proper for this purpoſe; then you let looſe your Soul to all that is charming in Merriment and Jeſting, and take the whole Pleaſure that a familiarity of Hearts does uſually beget.

At ſuch a time as this you will be ready to think of that fine Expreſſion of *Cicero* uſed to his deareſt Friend, *Unam tecum apricationem in Lucretino tuo ſole malim, quam iſta omnia Regna: I vow, my dear* Atticus, *that I would chuſe to poſſeſs one little Chamber near you, in your Country Houſe, rather than all thoſe Kingdoms, to*

which the great Leader of our Armies does aſpire.

In fine, O Chriſtian, in this ſame Solitude it is, where you have the Pleaſure perfectly to enjoy your ſelf, ſuch a Pleaſure as you are continually ſighing after, during the Troubles and Toils of the Employments you are in; but be mindful, that the ſureſt way to be right with your ſelf, is to be perfectly ſo with God: *Veni dilecte mi, egrediamur in agrum, Commorremur in Villis.*

MAXIM

MAXIM XXV.

Donum & Pax eſt, electis ejus. Sap. iii.

PARAPHRASE.

Peace, the moſt precious Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, dwells in the Hearts and Houſes of the Elect.

REFLECTIONS.

It will ſignifie little to have Riches in your Family, if you want Peace in it: How many mighty and wealthy Houſes do we ſee become the Horror and the Scandal both of Heaven and Earth, by their domeſtick Diſcords!

Two unruly Horſes put into a Boat, where there is a Company of Paſſengers, that fight and drown with themſelves all theſe Perſons, who go about to part them, is the true Figure of that Man and his Wife who are daily renewing of old Quarrels and Diſputes, and flying to their Kin-

dred and Friends with their Complaints; their Children diſſatisfied both with Father and Mother, joyn in a Scandalous Faction, and do all they can to defame and ruine them; their Servants, ill exampled, carry abroad all the Reproaches they make one to another, and divulge them far and near, with the Diſorders of their Maſter's and Miſtreſſes Life, whether true or falſe: In fine, the Curſes and Blaſphemies which their Fury begets ringing continually in the Ears of their Neighbours, to ſhow the deplorable Condition of their Temper and Affairs, are to be reckoned as ſo many Tempeſts, that come from Heaven with its Malediction, ready to make the Earth open under their Feet, and ſwallow them up with their Unhappy Family, in which, according to St. *Gregory*, the Fire of Hell is already kindled, for a beginning of their Damnation, which is to end in everlaſting Deſpairs.

Get you Peace within your Doors; to effect which, follow the Counſel of that old Philoſopher, who ſeeing a Man tranſported with Fury, asked him, what it was gave him that high Diſpleaſure, and at whom

whom he was ſo angry: *At my Shadow*, anſwer'd this furious Man, *I run after it as faſt as I can, to ſtop it; I call, and threaten it with Oaths, and with my Sword, and uſe all ways to bring it to my Will, but to no purpoſe, which makes me mad. What would you have with it? I would have it*, ſays he, *ſtand ſtill, and not move. Stand you ſtill your ſelf*, replied the Philoſopher, *and make no manner of motion, do not you ſtir, and you will ſee it will obey you preſently, and keep it ſelf in the poſture you would have it. What would you be at*, added he? *You call to your Shadow to be wiſe, and at the ſame time you play the Fool, and forget that this Shadow is not to be ruled by your Words, but your Example.*

Do as I have ſaid; get Peace into your Family, ſeek to lodge it there from the beginning, by taking a due Authority upon you, which is not to be done by entring into it with Heats and Fury, ſo to ſhow that your Temper will exempt no Body from its Severity; this would be to declare, that you would have your Shadow, that is, the People under your Obedience, be as mad as your ſelf, and to make the

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turbulency of your Spirit ſhake the whole Frame of your Houſe, and turn every thing in it the wrong ſide upwards: where a Mad-man governs, there will not be any thing ſeen but Folly and Madneſs in that Family.

'To take a true poſſeſſion of your Au-'thority, ſays St. *Gregory*, you muſt make 'it appear by your Words, and by the 'Temper of your Mind, which you ſet 'before the Eyes of your Domeſticks, that 'you love your own Duty, and that you 'would have thoſe that live under you 'like their Duty alſo after your Example, 'and apply themſelves to it, not by chiding 'and noiſes, but as their pleaſure and con-'tent.

To ſucceed in this, the whole Point lies, according to the Opinion of that holy Doctor, in making your ſelf to be both feared and loved by your Family: *Make your ſelf*, ſays he, *to be feared, without bringing forth one word of heat and inconſiderate raſhneſs: make your ſelf to be loved, without uſing any unfitting Compliances and Familiarities, and leaſt of all ſuch Fondneſſes, as will ſooner gain you Contempt than*

win

win you Hearts : In the preſence of your Servants and Children there ſhould not be too great a freedom of Words, rather a Reſerve, but let the Ayre of your Face ſhew all the Sweetneſs and Humanity imaginable, accompanied with a certain Gracefulneſs able to beget in thoſe you govern a high opinion of your Virtue, and a reſpectful and true love for your Perſon, joyned to an earneſt deſire to pleaſe you.

Follow herein the Rules of Wiſdom, and not the Example of ſome Maſters, who indeed uſe not any words, but yet by their angry Silence and curſt ſuſpicious Looks do accuſe the firſt they meet with, and diſtaſte every one that comes near them, cauſing this way more noiſe and diſorder in a Family, than others do by letting looſe the Reins to the violence of their Choler.

The moſt beneficial matter that I can propoſe here to you, is to place often before your Thoughts the Picture of that happy Family, which the Prophet *David* has drawn, ranked about a Table at the time of their Repaſt, with a Decency, that the Angels ſeem to invite one another to behold and admire : This Family is compoſed

poſed of a Maſter who has no other deſign in his governing, but to pleaſe God; of a Miſtreſs that has no other aim in this low World, but to be pleaſing to her Husband, and to ſee her Children grow up in Grace and Wiſdom; of Children, that have in a manner but one Heart, Nature and Education having begot this conformity amongſt them, which does happily encreaſe with their Age. In this Piece is ſeen beſides Peace, Piety, Proſperity, and Abundance crowning this Family in this Life, and God beholding it, with expectation to receive it into another Life infinitely more happy, which he has prepared for it. *Donum & Pax eſt electis ejus. Ecce ſic benedicitur homo qui timet Dominum.*

FINIS.

A

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OF THE

TEXTS of SOLOMON,

On which the foregoing Reflections are grounded.

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Utere quaſi homo frugi his quæ tibi apponuntur. Eccl. xxxi. p. 165

Maxim XX.

Si dormieris non timebis; quieſces, & ſuavis erit, ſomnus tuus. Prov. iii. p. 169

Maxim

Maxim XXI.

Non habet amaritudinem Converſatio illius, nec tædium Convictus illius. Sap. viii. p. 181

Maxim XXII.

Propoſui hunc adducere mecum ad convivendum, Sciens quoniam mecum Communicabit de bonis. Sap. viii. p. 193

Maxim XXIII.

Erit allocutio Cogitationis meæ, & tædii mei. Sap. viii. p. 199

Maxim XXIV.

Veni dilecte mi, Egrediamur in agrum, Commorremur in Villis. Cant. vii. p. 207

Maxim XXV.

Donum & Pax eſt, electis ejus. Sap. iii. p. 213